

AUSTRALIA'S ONLY PLAYABLE PS2 DVD DEMO DISC!



PlayStation®2

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-AUSTRALIA

AUSSIE EXCLUSIVE!

RESIDENT DEVIL

Dante's back in a hot new shooter.
Capcom's monster reviewed!



BODY SLAM!

World's biggest rap stars
duke it out in the ring!

SPY vs SPY

Who's the king of the stealth sims?
MGS: Substance or Splinter Cell?

SIMTACULAR

Lead a double life on your PS2!
Full review of EA's loony life sim!

WIRED FOR SOUND

Make the most of your PS2's
surround sound power!

80+
PAGES OF THE
HOTTEST
GAMES

FINAL FANTASY X-2

Hot screens and details of
2003's must have RPG!

PLUS!

- Contra ■
 - Pride FC ■
 - BMX XXX ■
 - The Mark of Kri ■
 - Space Channel 5 v.2 ■
 - Sword of the Samurai ■
 - Star Wars: Clone Wars ■
- 20+ pages of the only PS2
game reviews you can trust

EXCLUSIVE PLAYABLE PS2 DISC!

FEATURING » Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance » WWE
Smackdown: Shut Your Mouth » Primal » Sly Raccoon » Tiger
Woods PGA Tour 2003 » Space Channel 5 v2 » NBA Live 2003
» ATV2: Quad Power Racing » Crashed » Ghost Recon

PLUS » Zone of the Enders 2 » Alpine Racer 3 » Ape Escape 2 »
War of the Monsters » The Mark of Kri » And Heaps More!



PRINT POST APPROVED PP255003/05638

AUS \$14.95 (inc GST)
NZD \$14.95 (inc GST)
ISSUE 12 MARCH 2003

DERWENT HOWARD



12

RESULT!

The most realistic, hardcore fighting game on PlayStation 2®



KICK BOXING vs JUI JITSUI vs TAE KWON DO



"Broken bones, excruciating submissions and one punch knock-outs... the most brutally realistic beat-'em-up... ever"
Games Radar

"The most violent sport in the world"
PSM2



PlayStation 2
THQ
All rights reserved. © 2000 Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved.

vs KARATE vs JUDO vs KICK BOXING vs JUI JIT



PlayStation®2

PRIDE
FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIPS

www.thq.co.uk/pride



MA15+
Medium Level Animated
Violence & Medium Level
Coarse Language

GAME REVIEWS



ON THE COVER
Dante shows he's back to stay with the devilish DMC2.

067

054 **DEVIL MAY CRY 2**

The bosses are bigger, the graphics are slicker and the moves are more stylish, but is this shooter worth the hype?

060 **THE SIMS**

The addictive simulation of life, the universe and everything hits PS2. Should you move in?

068 **THE MARK OF KRI**

Rau stabs, slashes and slices his way through one of the best cut 'em ups to appear on the PS2.

- 067 SPACE CHANNEL 5 v2
- 068 STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS
- 070 ACTIVISION ANTHOLOGY
- 071 CONTRA: SHATTERED SOLDIER
- 072 SWORD OF THE SAMURAI
- 073 PRIDE FC
- 074 PAC-MAN WORLD 2
- 075 BIG MUTHA TRUCKERS
- 076 LEGENDS OF WRESTLING 2
- 076 MONOPOLY PARTY
- 077 ALPINE RACER 3
- 077 ATV2 QUAD RACING
- 078 BMX XXX
- 078 JINX

PlayStation®2

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-AUSTRALIA



PREVIEWS

- 021 **INTRO**
- 022 **TOMB RAIDER: AOD**
Lara bounces back in her first PS2 title. Exclusive new screens.
- 024 **MGS2: SUBSTANCE**
The snake stands tall in his new adventure.
- 026 **FINAL FANTASY X-2**
Yuna leads the way forward in the first genuine FF sequel.
- 027 **TRUE CRIME: SOLA**
Does it have the right stuff or will it be a GTA wannabe?
- 028 **SHINOBI**
Sega's classic 16-bit ninja title backflips onto PS2.
- 030 **MACE GRIFFIN**
Vivendi's shooter looks like it could be the PS2's Halo.
- 032 **TENCHU: WRATH OF HEAVEN**
Looks like it might out-slash Shinobi for the ninja crown.
- 033 **CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN**
The PC blockbuster arrives with both barrels blazing.
- 034 **RTX RED ROCK**
LucasArts' stunning new shooter plays a treat.
- 035 **WAR OF THE MONSTERS**
Stomp Tokyo with Godzilla in this crazy beat 'em up.

FEATURES

- 038 **PLAY IT AGAIN SAM**
Super spy Sam Fischer brings his MGS2-beating stealth shooter, *Splinter Cell*, to PS2. Read the first preview and interview here!
- 044 **YOU'RE SURROUNDED!**
OPS2 susses out everything you need to know for the ultimate surround sound experience; how to get the best bang for your buck and which games to go for.
- 051 **BLING IN THE RING**
Def Jam *Vendetta* takes your favourite rappers, throws them into a wrestling ring, adds some *Fight Club*-style grit and comes up with one hell of a good brawler.

REGULARS

006 **EDITOR'S LETTER**

008 **ON THE DVD**

012 **SPY**

OPS2 has the exclusive scoops on Namco's new blockbusters, *Soul Calibur II* and *Dead To Rights*. Further news on: Square's surprising merger with Enix, *Moto GP3*, an expansion pack for *The Getaway*, and more!

021 **MONITOR**

036 **INTERVIEW**

While *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City* was shattering sales records all over the place, *The Getaway* quietly stole second place last Christmas. To spill the beans on why it was such a success, we spoke to the game's Lead Designer, Chun Wah Kong.

053 **REVIEWS**

The onslaught of quality PS2 titles continues. *OPS2* put the latest wave of games through their paces.

080 **MEDIA DVD**

This month's reviews: *Austin Powers in Goldmember*, *The Royal Tenenbaums* and *Murder by Numbers*.

082 **POSTAL**

084 **SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Save money and get the chance to win the ultimate *Pride FC* pack!

086 **HARDWARE**

This month's guide: *OPS2* walk you through the trickiest bits of *GTA: Vice City*. Plus tips & cheats for *BMX XXX*, *GTA: Vice City*, *Need for Speed: Hot Pursuit 2* and more!

092 **SHORTLIST**

Check out the fresh look to *OPS2*'s ongoing efforts to help you develop the perfect PlayStation 2 collection.

097 **COMPETITIONS**

098 **NEXT ISSUE**





PlayStation®2

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-AUSTRALIA

PlayStation®2

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-AUSTRALIA

WRITE TO

Derwent Howard Publishing Pty. Ltd.
P.O. Box 1037 Bondi Junction,
NSW, 2022
Telephone : 02 9386 4666
Fax : 02 9386 4288
Email : OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au

EDITORIAL

EDITOR : **Richie Young**
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR : **Dan Toose**
dan@derwenthoward.com.au

ART DIRECTOR : **Jason Steel**
jason@derwenthoward.com.au

EUROPEAN OFFICE : **Sam Richards**
JAPANESE OFFICE : **Amos Wong**
SUB EDITOR : **Leigh Coughlan**
OFFICE MANAGER : **Cathy Plane**

CREATIVE DIRECTOR : **Jane Mennon**

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS : **Tristan Ogilvie** :
Stuart Clarke : **James Ellis** : **Scott**
Anthony : **Anthony O'Connor** : **Oliver**
Hurley : **Jos Bickham** : **Martin Kitts** :
David McCarthy : **Paul Rose** : **Kelth**
Stuart : **Mark Walbank** : **Karl Witherston**
David McCarthy : **George Walter** : **Paul**
Fitzpatrick : **Derek Lee** : **Jason Hill** : **Tim**
Clark : **Dean Evans** : **Adrian Lawton** :
Eric Bratcher

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS :
Martin Burton : **Stuart McCall**
CONTRIBUTING ILLUSTRATORS :
Will Barras : **Daniel Mackie**

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Customer Order Line : 136 116
(Local call cost within Australia)
On-line Orders : op2.magshop.com.au

ADVERTISING

ADVERTISING MANAGER : **Joshua Hodge**
josh@derwenthoward.com.au
Call advertising on : 02 9386 4666
Fax advertising on : 02 9386 4288

THE SUITS

DIRECTOR : **Jim Flynn**
DIRECTOR : **Nathan Berkley**
FINANCIAL DIRECTOR : **Gary Peroy**
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR : **Debra Taylor**
ADVERTISING DIRECTOR : **Paul Hardy**
MARKETING MANAGER : **Beth Hardy**
FINANCIAL CONTROLLER : **Ray Gillis**

Software piracy should not be condoned. To report
suspicious activity please e-mail piracy@sce.net
or alternatively, call 02 8256 5111.
Distributed throughout Australia by NDD. Printed in
Australia by PMP Print. Distributed throughout
New Zealand by IHD.

The PS logo and PlayStation are trademarks of
Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. © Copyright 2001
All rights reserved.

Official PlayStation 2 Magazine accepts no responsibility
for loss or damage of unsolicited contributions.



RICHIE'S TOP 2

RATCHET AND CLANK (SCEE) OUT NOW

It's been a while since I've fallen
head over heels for a platformer
but the Clankster just has what it
takes. I've been playing this non-
stop with my girlfriend (Heather
Graham) for the last month.

CITY VICE CITY (ROCKSTAR) OUT NOW

Cruising around 80s Miami with
an Uzi in your pocket was always
going to be great. I already own
most of the city but I can't stay
away. When I'm not hanging out at
my movie studio I'm keeping the
streets safe - for my crime gangs.



JASON'S TOP 2

THE MARK OF KRI (SCEE) OUT NOW

I've always wondered what a
Disney character would look like
tearing the squeegledy spoooge
out of another. This game rocks!

MACE GRIFFIN: BOUNTY HUNTER

(VIVENDI) OUT NOW

Having seen this baby in action,
I'm pretty damn excited! First-
person shooters have always
been my drug of choice and
space combat is always a bit of
a giggle. This game combines
both in a very seamless and sexy
way. It sort of reminds me of that
game with that green dupe...

**"Now that
there really
is something
for everyone,
I reckon
we're at the
dawn of the
brightest
period of
gaming yet."**



EDITOR'S LETTER



Keeping everyone happy is impossible in almost any
situation, and videogames are no exception. Being a
relatively young industry, many game developers and
publishers openly admit that they're still just learning,
even when they've been cranking out games for years.

Should developers be thinking about the hardcore gamers
when they're making their games, or considering the masses of
enthusiastic newcomers to our favourite past time?

Devil May Cry 2 proves to us how difficult striking this balance
must be, even for veterans like Capcom. With the first game being
a real hit with hardcore gamers more so than the casual gamer,
would Capcom be wrong to think that it should try and change it to
be more suited to a wider audience? Some purists will say 'yes',
and that's fair enough when they're passionate about their games.

Old school gamers might talk about the 'golden years' of
gaming as a time when almost every game was made purely
for the fans. But today on PS2 we enjoy the most diverse line-
up of games ever seen. Now that there really is something out
there for everyone, I reckon we're at the dawn of the brightest
period of gaming yet.

With the PlayStation 2 seeing new kinds of games like
The Sims, and broadband online gaming just around the corner,
PS2 are certain things are looking brighter every day.

R. Young

RICHIE YOUNG
Editor



SUBSCRIBE

136116

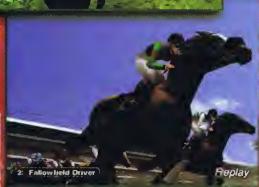
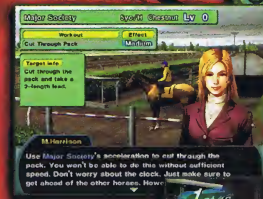
SUBSCRIBE TO OPS2 NOW FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN OVER \$3,000 IN PRIDE FC PRIZES!

With an OPS2 subscription you can get 12 issues at just \$10.41* each. That's a MASSIVE 30% off the cover price!

Every new subscriber will go in the draw to win a Pride FC pack containing the game, video and t-shirt!

As a special treat, Official PlayStation Magazine in conjunction with THQ Australia are offering an offer just too good to
refuse! Get this - everyone who registers before the closing date will stand to win an awesome Pride FC prize pack!

Turn to page 84 for all the details! *Offer applies to Australian residents only



Man and Horse become One

G1 JOCKEY 3

Each horse has its own unique strengths and weaknesses, guaranteeing authentic jockey action!

- Adjust the bit, change the lead leg and more! As the jockey, you have complete control. Use your skills to get the most from your horse and be first at the post!
- Some horses don't like being boxed in, some have an excellent start, others can run at a fast pace. Use these to your advantage and work your way to victory!

New "Workout" feature lets you get your rides into top form for upcoming races!

Jump races are now incorporated into the Story Mode as well!

AVAILABLE MARCH 2003



G1 JOCKEY and the KOEI logo are trademarks of KOEI Co., Ltd. © 2003 KOEI Co., Ltd. All rights reserved.
THQ and its logo are registered trademarks of THQ Inc. All rights reserved.
"PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

PlayStation®2





ON THE DVD

PLAYABLE DEMOS

OTHER MAGAZINES LET YOU WATCH, OPS2 LETS YOU PLAY...

MORTAL KOMBAT DEADLY ALLIANCE

WARNING: IN THE INTERESTS of bringing you this demo (without anyone getting arrested) we have removed all of the blood from this version of *Mortal Kombat*. The full game features gore and carnage that would obviously give 14-year-olds nightmares. Well, maybe not, but you know the drill.

That said, our demo does feature all the moves and action for two playable characters in Arcade mode and there's a raft of non-selectable fighters to spar against in a variety of locations from the game.

Also worthy of attention is the excellent Training mode included in the demo. Notice that the characters' moves change dramatically as you press **△** to change stance. Regular checking with the In-game moves list will keep you on the right track, and make you near invincible when you buy the full game.

We've done it again – another astounding line-up of playable demos clamour for your attention this month. There's *Primal*, of course, in which you can see for yourself if demonic rock chick Jen Tate has what it takes to step to Lara Croft. Then, if you wondered why we were getting so excited about campy-dressed psychopaths with sharp swords last month, you can find out by playing *Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance*.

You also need to check out the sumptuous cartoon visuals of *Sly Raccoon* and luxuriate in the leafy links of *Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2003*, unarguably the best golf game ever. Plus we've got another spectacular exclusive for you: *Space Channel 5 Part 2*, with a level for all you gamers that are able to keep time, or simply like gawking at Ulala shaking her assets. Enjoy.

RY

RICHIE YOUNG
Editor

PS To use this DVD, load it up on your PS2. Then scroll between games and rolling demos with the **↓** and **↑** keys. To choose within a section use **←** and **→**. Press **△** to start up your choice. Please note, you may have to reset your PS2 after some demos.



challenge

Complete our demo (choosing a fighter and winning four complete two-round bouts) without losing a single round.

tip

To get you started, here's the special move for Scorpion's famous spear throw: Back, Forwards, **△**. This will stun your opponent and bring you face-to-face.



THE CONTROLS

D-pad Movement
△ Kick 1
○ Punch 1
□ Punch 2
× Kick 2
△ Taunt
□ Block
△ Change stance





RING OUT The pulling of mullets is not allowed!

WWE SMACKDOWN! SHUT YOUR MOUTH

IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME coming but we're proud to unleash our WWE SmackDown! Shut Your Mouth demo upon you. Featuring two fighters from the game, you can engage in two different types of match – including a full-on table, ladders and chairs' bout (aka TLC). Enter Exhibition mode (the only mode available in this demo as the others are teasingly obscured) then choose Single for a normal match-up or press **↑** and choose Special to find the selectable TLC match.

Next choose from Brock Lesner or Triple H and set your character's SmackDown meter (ie, how long it takes before he's able to – ahem – lay the SmackDown on his opponent). Now grapple away and hit that **Ⓢ** button at the chosen moment to perform your character's signature move.

THE CONTROLS

- | | |
|---------|-------------------|
| L-stick | Movement |
| △ | Run |
| ⊙ | Reverse |
| Ⓢ | Grapple |
| ⓧ | Attack |
| Ⓛ | Lay the SmackDown |
| Ⓜ | Taunt |
| Ⓢ | Change target |
| Ⓢ | Pause |



PUBLISHER: THQ
GAME TYPE: WRESTLING
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1-2 (FULL GAME 1-4)

tip

Use lots of taunts to get the action moving, then go for a grapple. From there you can mess with your enemy like he's putty in your hands.



PUBLISHER: SCE
GAME TYPE: ACTION/ADVENTURE
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1

OUR COVER GAME this month is a gothic horror adventure, but one which fortunately doesn't take itself too seriously.

First choose either the 50 or 60Hz mode at the demo's start. If your TV can handle it we recommend 60Hz mode for a full frame and full speed.

Our demo features a lengthy episode from the game and has extensive built-in training. Simply follow the captions at the bottom of the screen to learn the controls.

In-game character Scree will keep you on the right track too, leading you from objective to objective while explaining the finer points of the game's plot as you go. Dive in, explore and discover Primal for yourself.

THE CONTROLS

- | | |
|---------|-------------------------|
| L-stick | Movement |
| Ⓢ | Switch target |
| Ⓢ | Attack mode |
| Ⓢ | Spinning attack |
| Ⓢ | Left attack |
| Ⓢ | Reposition camera/Block |
| Ⓢ | Right attack |

tip

It's often worth switching between the multiple enemies (press **Ⓢ**) rather than taking each out in turn. This way you won't be attacked from behind.

ON THE DVD

ISSUE :: 012



PlayStation 2
PUBLISHER: SCEE
GAME TYPE: PLATFORMER
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1

Sly Raccoon

IT'S A GAME OF STEALTH, sneakiness and stealing. You are the sly raccoon of the title in a game that features a unique graphics style and more than a few gameplay innovations along the way, too.

A competition video begins the demo (if you're connected to the Internet then why not get involved?) then you're into the game itself. Keep an ear and eye out for progress updates from Bentley via your communicator, as you journey deeper into the level. As this demo is from the early stages of the game you won't find anything too strenuous on the finger or brain.

Your objective of course is to reach the level's end, and to get to grips with the game's controls and devices. It's certain to leave you wanting more.


■ **MGS WHO?** The codec is very familiar.

■ **NO ENTRY** Sly's world is not that friendly a place.

THE CONTROLS

L-stick Movement
R-stick Move camera
○ Jump
⊙ Attack
△/□ Scope
△ Pause

tip Can't get at what you want? Let the level's baddies destroy scenery for you, allowing you to pick up the formerly unreachable items.



PlayStation 2
PUBLISHER: EA
GAME TYPE: GOLF SIM
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1 (FULL GAME 1-8)



■ **EYE OF THE TIGER**
Inside the mind of the world's best golfer.



EVEN IF YOU ABSOLUTELY despise the game of golf, we guarantee that you will thoroughly enjoy the amazing Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2003. It's so good that EA has put together this demo to prove it to all you non-believers.

We've brought you four fully playable holes lifted straight from the game. So if you fancy a taster, step into Tiger's shoes and hit the greens.

And as if that wasn't enough there's also the excellent Player's Club fantasy level, which involves golf as you've never seen it before.

THE CONTROLS

L-stick Swing control
D-pad Move aiming marker
○ Change camera view
⊙ Change shot type/
△ Replay shot
□ Reset targeting mark
○ Zoom to target/Mulligan
⊙ Power boost
△ Spin control
⊙ Switch clubs
△ Switch clubs
△ Pause
△ Review hold fly by

■ **SWINGTIME** The settings are lovely.



tip Tap **△** during the backswing to increase your power, then tap **△** during the ball's flight along with a left stick direction to put spin on the ball.



PlayStation 2
PUBLISHER: SCEE
GAME TYPE: RHYTHM ACTION
OUT: N/A
PLAYERS: 1 (FULL GAME 1-2)

SPACE CHANNEL 5 Part 2

YOU NOW HAVE IN YOUR possession a bit of a PAL exclusive. At the time of writing SCEE has decided not to release this excellent rhythm action game in the UK. So, we Aussies appear to have something our friends over in Europe don't. Their loss, as this is one of the best rhythm action games around.

It's a simple and loveable little game that not only has highly distinctive graphic and an amazing simplicity of control style, it features a few excellent tunes, too.

And it's disturbingly fun to play. Simply watch the moves performed by your enemies then repeat them with your character. Ula! the micro-skirted TV reporter. Keep this up for long enough and they'll be destroyed.

THE CONTROLS

D-pad Directions
○ Chu
⊙ Key

tip It's all about the music. Remember the sequences then listen to the track and repeat the rhythm as well as pressing the right buttons in order to win.





WELCOME TO EA'S fiercely accurate basketball sim. Choose which team you want to play for by sliding your controller ← and → using the D-pad. We've giving you the choice of two top teams: either the LA Lakers or the New York Mets.

The on-screen controls (at the bottom of the screen) will keep you on the right track through the menus but it's that progresses you through the menus – so stop hammering Before the game actually starts you're given the option of adjusting the skill level of gameplay (to match your abilities) and choosing the camera angle you prefer, though this can be changed mid-game by pressing too.



PUBLISHER: EA
GAME TYPE: BASKETBALL SIM
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1-8

THE CONTROLS

Offensive:
L-stick Movement
R-stick EA freestyle control
D-pad Quick plays
 Backdown
 Direct pass/Fast break
 Turbo
 Alley oop
 Pass
 Crossover
 Spin Move
 Shoot
 Pause
 Call timeout

Defensive:
L-stick Movement
R-stick EA freestyle control
D-pad Quick plays
 Face up/Box out
 Direct switch/Last man back
 Turbo
 Take charge
 Switch players
 Steal
 Block/Rebound
 Take charge
 Pause
 Intentional foul

ATV2

QUAD POWER RACING

ATV IS OFF-ROAD RACING that comes with sharp handling. The controls will take a bit of getting used to but that's what this demo is for. We have two modes on offer: A Single Race or a Training mode. Choose your rider, get on your quad bike and hit the track. It's possible to earn valuable boosts by performing tricks or by kicking one of your fellow racers off their bike and stealing their boost in the process.

A counter (bottom left) shows you how much time you have remaining before the demo times out, but you'll surely win the race before that?



THE CONTROLS

L-stick Steer/Lean forwards and back
R-stick Accelerate/Brake
D-pad Steer/Lean forwards and back
 Accelerate
 Brake/Reverse
 Look back
 Boost
 Bicycle
 Change camera
 Preload springs
 Kick
 Pause



PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM
GAME TYPE: RACING
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1 (FULL GAME 1-2)

CRASHED

IN MOST DRIVING GAMES avoiding the other cars is a good idea. Not so with *Crashed*. First of all move down to 'OK' and select it to get the demo going. Now choose your name (or make do with the 'Player 1' identity on offer) and you're into the thick of it.

There are Multi-Tag and Free-For-All events inside, selectable by pressing ← and → to choose your track (the two tracks on offer being home to the two events). And before selecting your car why not press ↑ and ↓ on the D-pad to choose a paint job? In the Multi-Tag game you must hit every other vehicle in the arena before the timer runs out, whereas in Free-For-All points are earned for Impacts with other cars – first to the points limit (or in this demo, the person with the highest score) wins. Simple.



PUBLISHER: RAGE
GAME TYPE: RACING
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1 (FULL GAME 1-2)

THE CONTROLS

L-stick Steering
R-stick Accelerate/Brake
D-pad Steering
 Accelerate
 Brake/Reverse
 Handbrake
 Look left
 Change camera
L3 Horn
 Look right
 Nitro boost
 Pause

Tom Clancy's GHOST RECON

IT'S DEBATABLE QUITE HOW MUCH of the game programming Tom Clancy does himself but when it comes to steady-paced army games of realism and stealth, he's the master.

This demo mission taken from the game has four clear objectives: To take out the initial camp and the soldiers lurking around the tents; to secure the caves; to return to the start point; and finally to go back and kill Papashvili. Remember you can only find and kill Papashvili once all the other troops have been killed.

It may take an age to get used to all the controls (experimentation is the best option) but the scanner at the bottom of the screen will at least keep you on the right track.



PUBLISHER: UBI SOFT
GAME TYPE: FPS
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1



THE CONTROLS

L-stick Shuffle, Walk, Run/
Strafe left and right
Ri-stick Turn left, right/
Look up and down
↑ Stance up
↓ Stance down
←→ Change soldier
↻ Reload
Ⓢ Change weapon
Ⓜ Night vision
Ⓟ Perform action
Ⓛ Command map
Ⓡ Zoom out
Ⓛ3 Peek mode (with L-stick ←→)
Ⓡ Fire weapon
Ⓡ Zoom in
Ⓡ Quick order
Ⓡ Pause/Options

CHECK OUT THESE VIDEOS OF THE HOTTEST NEW PS2 RELEASES...



ZOE: THE 2ND RUNNER

In order to celebrate and publicise the arrival of Hideo Kojima's robo-sequel we've an impressive anime cartoon constructed from ZOE's action sequences.



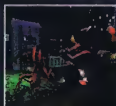
ALPINE RACER 3

Namco and Sony want to bring you more. This polished videodrome shows off the game to perfection. As to how it plays we'll stick with SSX Tricky thanks.



APE ESCAPE 2

Despite being lengthy, lavishly produced and packed with in-game action, this trailer simply can't express the variety and sheer inventiveness on offer in the full game.



WAR OF THE MONSTERS

More of those warring monsters, and, as you can see, the game is shaping up nicely, with plenty of destructible scenery and cool monster designs.



THE MARK OF KRI

This fills in a little more of the plot and features a lot more in-game footage in order to tempt those searching for a little combat-orientated action/exploration with violence.



LMA MANAGER 2003

Pretty much exactly the same as they did last year and this amazing video merely highlights what a decent and enjoyable game LMA always was.



GTA: VICE CITY

We know you're almost certainly knee-deep in the finished game by now but we couldn't resist running this video featuring three tracks from the game's soundtrack.



JUDGE DREDD VS JUDGE DEATH

A short teaser introducing the idea of Judge Dredd stomping about inside your PS2. As for in-game footage you'll just have to wait some more.



UNCOVERING THE LATEST PS2 NEWS EVERY MONTH

SPY CONTRIBUTORS: TIM CLARK, DAN TOOSE, GEORGE WALTER.

■ **GUNNING FOR THE TOP**
Tough cop Jack Slate fronts the Namco battle for PS2 gaming supremacy.

EXCLUSIVE!

NAMCO-A-GO-GO!

Namco's back with a vengeance in 2003! OPS2 gets hands-on with what's in store.

TEKKEN, RIDGE RACER, Time Crisis, Moto GP... all PlayStation classics, some almost synonymous with most gamers' earliest PSone memories. Few could forget the sheer excitement of playing the original *Ridge Racer* ('it's like having the arcade game in your own home!'). And who didn't gasp in awe at the 3-D camera pans in

DID YOU KNOW?
Namco was created in 1958 by Masaya Nakamura. It originally made fairground rides.

Tekken, or enjoy the novelty of playing *Time Crisis* with a lightgun?
Namco is now set to do the same again with a set of PS2 titles that break new ground for the esteemed developer: *Namco Hometek's* cop thriller *Dead To Rights*, Monolith Soft's effervescent space opera RPG *Xenosaga Episode 1: Der Wille Zur Macht* and the PS2 debut of one of the most acclaimed 3D arcade fighters of all time, *Soul Calibur II*.
We give you OPS2's introduction to three of the most exciting titles to watch in 2003. □ GW

SKIP INTRO
In a hurry? Here's the condensed version...
Namco is planning to take the PS2 by storm in 2003. With titles like *Dead To Rights*, *Soul Calibur II* and *Xenosaga Episode 1*, the company's going to make a killing. Not having a confirmed publisher for these titles has made them tricky to chase up, but with *Soul Calibur 2* recently being snapped up by EA, expect the other two to follow suit.

Dead To Rights

What's the story here?
Hard-ass cop Jack Slate (that's you) attends a routine call to a shootout at a building site in the crime-ridden Grant City, but it's no ordinary gun battle. After dispatching a set of gang members he finds his father dead in a pool of blood having been brutally murdered. So begins a tale of revenge and macho gunslinging on a scale rarely seen outside Hong Kong action movies.

Tell us about the action...
Slate has a number of trademark moves. The first is his special dive (a bit like *Max Payne's* 'bullet time') which allows him to jump in slow motion and pick off hapless victims at double speed. Second is his array of 'disarms' where our cop hero removes an enemy's gun from his person then executes him with a nasty squelch. Jack can call upon his dog Shadow to sniff out bombs, explore tunnels and lend a pair of sharp teeth in a

fight. Action is varied – you'll shoot enemies from a helicopter, blow up vehicles with gas canisters, break out of prison and, in one memorable sequence, escape from a burning hotel while fire rises by the second.

Any favourite moments?
The distressingly gory animation that accompanies Shadow removing a man's larynx with a shower of lurid claret.

Anything else we should know?
It's not just shooting. There are context-specific puzzles (lock picking, bomb defusing), some brilliant mini-games like weightlifting, arm wrestling and our favourite, the lap dancing Bernal. You gotta believe...

Likely release date?
It's out in the States already with a local publisher to be confirmed, but OPS2 suspect it'll be through EA, sometime this Autumn.



■ **DOG GONE** Keep an eye on your canine partner.



■ **TABLE FOR ONE** It was hard to get reservations at this restaurant.



LIGHTNING ROD
No need for a welder when this guy's about.



FLOWER POWER The rose petal/rainbow move seemed to be most effective.



STAR APPEAL
We like the look of her club.

Xenosaga Episode 1: Der Wille Zur Macht

What's the story here?

Well, to be precise, there are about ten. *Xenosaga* is the first in a six-part RPG epic conceived by writer/director Tetsuya Takahashi. It's set in the future when space colonisation is rife and follows a myriad of interwoven story lines in a way that only Japanese RPGs can muster. Space is ruled by the Galactic Federation, but equally powerful is the Vector Corporation for whom the game's heroine, the delightful Shion Uzuki, works. She's developing a new kind of weapon known as KOS-MOS to deal with the mysterious alien Gnosis who have the ability to shift through space and time.

Tell us about the action...

For the first few hours there's a barrage of cut-scenes in which players are introduced to characters and their motivations before the turn-based action begins. Players have two or three basic attacks, a magic attack

and a special attack, triggered when a character has enough Action Points. It might sound baffling but some of the effects used in the battles are astounding, with particle effects and full-screen explosions galore.

Any favourite moments?

We particularly like the way the game artists have given the anime characters a 3D twist. *Xenosaga*'s visuals, effects and animations are all highly polished.

Anything else we should know?

The game features giant robots or, as they're called here, Anti-Gnosis Weapon Systems (AGWS). And they're all fully customisable.

Likely release date?

Already out in Japan and partially localised for a US release on 25 February, it can't be too long before we see this levitating RPG sci-fi game in Australia, possibly through Sony.



Soul Calibur II

What's the story here?

You thought this was all about fighting, eh? Think again. *Soul Calibur II* returns to the Far East, where Nightmare, owner of the evil Soul Edge sword, has arisen. Elsewhere, heroes who have vanquished the wicked Soul Edge in past encounters are being drawn together. Sounds like we've got a fight on our hands...

Tell us about the action...

Soul Calibur II relies on a good grasp of 3D movement and the ability to pull off fast combo attacks. It's predominantly weapons-based, but also has deep variation in throws. Despite sticking closely to the original formula, Namco promises new move sets, costumes and larger fighting arenas.

Any favourite moments?

We're looking forward to testing out the new characters - Cassandra Alexandra (sister of Sophitia), Tarim, Hon Yun Tsun and Rafael.

Anything else we should know?

It's already out in the arcades. Namco is currently porting it to PS2, undoubtedly improving it graphically in the process. It's handy that the game was built using System 246, an arcade chipset very similar to PS2's.

Likely release date?

We thought it'd be out by now, but it's looking more like it will be out late autumn. At least it now it's confirmed EA are the local distributors, as this amazing game was floating in release schedule limbo.

GOT GIMP? Blind, and with a disturbing S&M fetish.



Looking further ahead...

Judging by the strength of the majority of Namco's series, it seems entirely likely that a new *Ridge Racer* isn't far off being announced - a brief, behind-closed-doors teaser trailer was shown at last year's E3. Of the first 3D online titles announced at Tokyo's Third PlayStation Meeting last February, five were promised from Namco including RPG *Venus And Braves*, an action adventure game (possibly *Klonoa Online*), a sports title and a 3D flight shooting game that we're almost certain is *Ace Combat Online*. Then there's *Moto GP3* (covered in this issue's *Spy* section) plus the inevitable *Tekken 5* and *Time Crisis 3*.

DOMINATION!

SQUARE DEAL

Japanese über-developers merge to become 'biggest in the world'.

FINAL FANTASY DEVELOPER

Square has announced a merger with Enix, creator of the hugely popular Japanese RPG series.

The amalgamation of the two RPG gaming giants puts all the creativity behind some of Japan's bestselling titles under one roof with the potential to co-develop original games for PlayStation 2.

The companies will begin operating as a single entity from 1 April, renamed Square Enix and led by Square's current President, Yoichi Wada. Speaking about the deal, Wada-san said, "We are going on the offensive with this merger. This will make our strengths complement each other."

The deal is worth a whopping ¥89 billion (\$138 billion) and although Square cites the increased cost of developing networked games and competition from overseas developers as motivating factors behind the deal, the losses incurred by the box office failure of its animated film *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* also contributed.

In their official statement, Square and Enix mentioned that they had no intention to combine the *Dragon*

Quest and *Final Fantasy* series, although it doesn't take an RPG buff to realise that this would be a potential goldmine – *Final Fantasy* games are legendary throughout the gaming world in both the East and West, and *Dragon Quest* is even more successful with over 30 million copies sold to date, mainly in Asia.

The newly formed company has an impressive line-up for the first part of the year: Enix recently announced a brand new instalment of *Dragon Quest* (number eight in the series) for PS2, and its forthcoming RPG *Star Ocean 3: Till The End Of Time* has projected sales of over two million. Square will release *FFX-2* in February and then *FFX-3*, while their top development team is working on *FFXIII*. The Japanese developer is also in negotiation with Disney over a sequel to *Kingdom Hearts*.

PRESIDENT YOICHI WADA, SQUARE
"WE ARE ON THE OFFENSIVE WITH THIS MERGER. IT WILL COMPLEMENT OUR STRENGTHS"

■ **STARRY EYED** The future is looking rosy for RPG fans with the Square/Enix merger.

Much speculation is still brewing as to what the first official Square Enix title will be. A recent rumour has suggested that *Parasite Eve: Rebirth*, a remake of the PSone survival horror RPG, could be released. Either way, it's safe to say that any title devised by such high calibre developers will undoubtedly be the biggest news for RPG fans since Aeri popped her clogs. This pairing truly is a match made in gaming heaven. □ GW/TC

READY TO REPRESENT!

A winner emerges from the legions of Aussie Tekken fans!

WHEN THE TEN FINALISTS FROM the Official Tekken 4 competition gathered at the Sony Style complex at Sydney's Fox Studios, there was a real buzz in the air. On top of the obligatory nervous energy that a gathering of ten of the best Tekken 4 players in the country was generating, Australia had just demolished England in a one-day cricket match a couple hundred meters away. Hopefully this was a

sign of things to come for Alex Malano, who is now off to England to play off against the best Europe can muster.

Alex and his brother Diego scraped into the finals in 9th and 10th place in the qualification rounds, but on the big day, the boys from Melbourne looked set to dominate until Alex had to go through the unpleasant process of eliminating Diego in the 2nd round.

Squaring off against Alex in the final was Justin Jackson, providing a fantastic final, which was a welcome sight after several whitewash victories that evening. With Alex playing as Steve, and Justin being the best of the Heihachi users present, the crowd were treated to a nail-biter that went to the last round. It was a fitting end to a national competition that started in Electronics Boutique stores all around the country.

Diego is planning to accompany his brother to England, giving him some expert advice and support. Onya bro! ■ DT



THE RESULTS

1st Round

D. Malano [2] def. D. A. Barba [1]
 A. Malano [2] def. M. Mayona [0]
 H-J Kim [2] def. B. Calderwood [1]
 J. Jackson [2] def. A. Arriola [1]
 Yi Lu [2] def. T. Pert [1]

2nd Round

A. Malano [1] def. D. Malano [3]
 H-J Kim [3] def. A. Arriola [0]
 D. A. Barba [3] def. Yi Lu [2]
 J. Jackson [3] def. M. Mayona [0]

Semi-Final

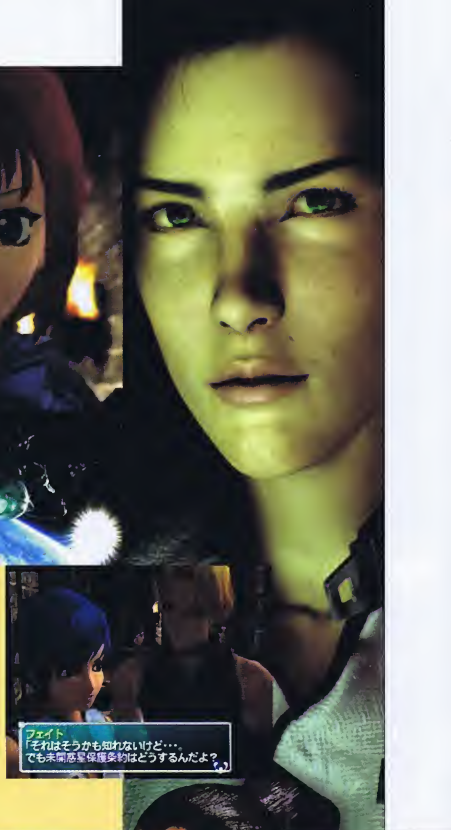
A. Malano [5] def. H-J Kim [1]
 J. Jackson [5] def. D.A. Barba [2]

Australian Grand Final

A. Malano [5] def. J. Jackson [4]



■ **MAULER MALANO**
 Aside from a close fought final, Alex calmly cleaned up.



フェイト
 それはそうかも知れないけど...
 でも来期優勝は果たはどうするんだよ?



OPS2 sincerely apologise to EB for last issue's incorrect statment that the qualifying rounds were held elsewhere. Without EB this tournament wouldn't have been possible.

Boutique **SP**



RAYMAN 3

new weapons



new powers



new enemies



GAME BOY ADVANCE



PlayStation 2



**PC
CD
ROM**



© 2002 Ubi Soft Entertainment. The logo and the character of Rayman are trademarks of Ubi Soft Entertainment. All rights reserved. TM, ® THE GAMEBOY ADVANCE LOGO AND THE NINTENDO GAMECUBE LOGO ARE TRADEMARKS OF NINTENDO. © 2002 NINTENDO. Playstation and the "PS" family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the US and/or other countries and are used with permission of Microsoft. All rights reserved.

■ **LOW RIDER** Notice the newly incorporated wind shield view. But keep your eyes on the road!



■ **SPLIT APPEAL** In the four-player game each player has a handicap for fairness.

BORN TO BE WILD

Big snarling motorbikes return to PS2 in Namco's Moto GP3.

SUBSCRIBERS TO THE maxim 'two wheels are better than four' will be roaring with excitement to hear that Namco is in the latter stages of development on Moto GP3. The first thing you'll notice about these exclusive new screenshots is the vastly improved visuals – to be expected, but impressive nonetheless. A new perspective has been added, too: the rider view, which puts players behind the steering column, looking at the instrument panel and viewing the course through the windscreens.

Aside from the aesthetics, Namco has addressed a regular complaint of the series – that there was no independent braking for front and rear wheels. Now, this will be included as an option for the more adept rider, allowing precise manipulation of the bike. Control of the riders' weight shift (which is independent of the bike) is also possible through movement of the



right analogue stick – a nice new feature for Moto GP3.

Two additional multiplayer modes have been added – a two-player Grand Prix mode (which allows two players to take part in a GP series) and a four-player Vs mode.

A handicap option is available in the Vs mode, so expert riders will be able to compete at an even level with less skilled competitors. Hopefully, this function will also be selectable in the main game to help prevent fall off at every corner's syndrome – a problem that afflicts the majority of motorbike inadequates. Keep checking *OPS2* for a hands-on playtest in the very near future. □ **GW**

■ **MOTO BABE** Big-eyed manga girls will feature heavily. We don't know why.

JOBS FOR THE MOB

The Getaway 2 and add-on pack confirmed.

TEAM SOHO INTENDS to release an add-on pack for *The Getaway* next year which will consist of 12 new Mark Hammond missions. Brendan McNamara, director of *The Getaway*, revealed that while one part of the SCEE studio was working on the new missions, another larger team would be creating a sequel. "It will be a back story for the existing characters, but the emphasis won't be on Mark. Our aim is to play around with the idea of being a bad guy, and find out why these characters became who they are."

With SCEE officially announcing broadband plans, can McNamara imagine doing *The Getaway Online*? "Some of the guys here at Team Soho would love to do it," he tells us. Gangland London on a global scale? Now there's something to look forward to. □ **GW**



STEP BACK IN TIME

Defying laws of physics in Computer Artworks' *A Sound Of Thunder*.



TIME TRAVEL HAS INSPIRED

many a writer and film director. *Time Bandits*, *The Terminator*, *Back To The Future* and *Bill & Ted* all toyed with the subject and showed the possible consequences of playing with time.

In *A Sound Of Thunder* you're a soldier of fortune fighting your way across Chicago to reach a time portal, travelling backwards and forwards in time to curb the 'Global Entropy' and their fiendish plans. To ensure this isn't just a bog standard, third-person shooter, Computer Artworks has invented some unique gameplay devices.

Players will have to engage in time-affected action puzzles and witness the Butterfly Effect where events that occur in the past change things in the future. There's a new twist on 'bullet time' – the pleasingly named *Time Freeze Disruptor* – and a series of deadly weapons, from the hack-and-slash *Machete* to the high-tech *Oxi Iodine Laser*. You'll have to be selective in what you kill, preserving natural life forms while destroying mutant hybrids.

With Computer Artworks' heritage assured in *The Thing*, this could be one to look out for. □ **GW**



■ **PORTAL RUNNER** We're guessing this is a time portal.



SLACK SABBATH

Ozzy Osbourne bites off more than he can chew.

WHEN SAVAGE SKIES, Big Ben's forthcoming mythical combat game developed by iRock, was unveiled in 2001, its main premise was to feature shambling rocker Ozzy Osbourne sat astride a dragon, raining hell down on the fantasy land below. Fast forward 18 months and the game is finally set for a PAL release – but sadly minus the *Prince Of Darkness*.

In *Savage Skies*, players will command one of 24 different winged beasts as three factions go to war in a battle for sovereignty. Each creature has a unique flight model comprised of over 50 variables and unique characteristics that determine how they handle, how much damage they sustain and their primary and secondary weapon make-ups.

There are 30 campaigns included (ten for each faction) all based around air-to-air and air-to-ground combat as

your dragon can swoop, barrel-roll and even take cover behind clouds. *Savage Skies* will be hoping to eclipse the current definitive dragon caper *Reign Of Fire* and become more than just a fire-breathing flight combat clone. □ **RB**





Xtreme Legends™

DYNASTY WARRIORS 3

The Warriors Return, and the Battle Rages On...



7 Untold Stories

Play as 7 fierce generals in Musou mode: Lu Bu, Diao Chan, Meng Huo, Zhu Rong, Zhang Jiao, Dong Zhuo and Yuan Shao. Completely revamped stages with new scenarios and events.

- Discover 5th Weapons and New Items!
- Four New Challenge Modes!
- New "Very Hard" Difficulty Level!
- Challenge Mode Ranking System!

Customise Your Bodyguards

Assign playable characters, including Lu Bu, as your bodyguards. Use Double Musou Attacks in a one-player game. Select the gender, uniform, and weapon for each guard in your unit.

**DW3
REMIX!!!**

Play XTREME LEGENDS by itself or with Dynasty Warriors 3 to power up the original with new XL features. Saved data is fully compatible between both games.

AVAILABLE MARCH 2003



Dynasty Warriors 3 Xtreme Legends and the KOEI logo are trademarks of KOEI Co., Ltd.
© 2003 KOEI Co., Ltd. All rights reserved. THQ and its logo are registered trademarks of THQ Inc. All rights reserved.
"PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

PlayStation®2



MYSTERY!

AX APPEAL

Is Korean developer Axis really working on a Gran Turismo beater?

IT'S A BIT OF A mystery this one...

Normally, being the savage news hounds that we are, Spy gets its stories direct from the developer's mouth. Just recently though, we discovered information about a game from the most unlikely of sources – a gaming web site forum. AX-Impact, allegedly in development by Korean developer Axis Entertainment for SCEI, was brought to our attention by the words of InterCooler on the GranTurismo.com forum.

Mr Cooler describes AX-Impact as a Gran Turismo-style racing game that's been in development since the "beginning of PlayStation 2," with "a level of detail never equalled on the console". He draws attention to the lighting effects on the cars, their accurately modelled interiors and

the fact that AX-Impact will feature real-time weather effects and realistic car damage models. Both of these features have been rumoured for inclusion in Gran Turismo 4 too.

To add even further mystique, the author of the forum post points us to the strange blurred-out portion of the screenshots. "This is an important/special feature of the game that cannot be released yet," he says cryptically. "It's never before been seen in a racing game!"

AN ELABORATE HOAX?

NO OFFICIAL WORD HAS COME FROM SCEE CONFIRMING THE EXISTENCE OF THIS GAME

■ **SEOUL SURVIVOR**
Made in Korea, yet set in Japan. Curiouser and curiouser...



■ TROUBLED WATERS

There are some original looking race environments on offer.



■ **ROAD SKILL** Axis's mystery game certainly uses hi-res textures.

■ ETERNAL FLAME

The presence of fire suggests the cars will incur damage.



MAKING PS2 GAMES BETTER

New PS2 programming technology helps build quality games.

WHILE PS2'S COMPETITORS ARE already talking about the next generation despite not really making an impression on the current one, Sony Computer Entertainment is instead committed to working with what it already has. Witness the recent distribution of the Performance Analyser, a high-tech programming tool that allows game makers to produce higher quality games, using the existing PS2 processor.

It works by highlighting inefficiency between three core components of the PS2's chip set – the Emotion Engine, Vector Units and Graphic Synthesizer. Game software is run through the Analyser, a kind of souped-up 'development kit' of the kind used to produce PS2 games so the programmer can identify problem areas in the code. When a similar system was utilised in PSone development there was a noticeable positive shift in games that used the technology, the first Gran Turismo being the most prominent example. First-party SCEI titles that have already benefited from the PA2 include *Primal* and *The Getaway*. Expect to see it used in a game near you very soon. □ GW

ebay.COM.AU

NEWS FOR MARCH

With *Activision Anthology* arriving into the office [see review on page 70], it wouldn't be a crime for us not to point out that it's still possible to get your hands on an Atari 2600 via eBay.

Grabbing one of these 20+ year old consoles isn't as hard as you might think, as the Atari 2600 was built like a brick for many years until it was eventually minimised. If you're serious about collecting things, acquiring a variety of models wouldn't be an expensive exercise.

There are countless games for the 2600, and being a cartridge-based system, most will still work today. Classics such as *Space Invaders*, *Pac-Man*, *Defender* and *Missile Command* are a feather in the cap for anyone seeking old school gaming cred. So what's the damage? Next to nothing for the games, with almost every game having a starting bid of \$5, and rarely going past \$10. There are always people selling them in groups of four or so for \$10-15. Consoles themselves go for as low as \$15! □ DT



PS3

WATCH

The latest on Sony's under-wraps wunderkit.

Although we don't want to start any premature rumours, Toshiba has just announced it's going into commercial production of the CELL processor, the fruit of a collaboration with Sony and IBM, to produce smaller, faster, and more efficient micro-processors. The thinking is, this CELL technology will eventually be incorporated into Sony's next-generation entertainment system. "CELL would obviously be the central chip for our next generation products," confirms SCEI spokesman Kenichi Fukunaga. "We're developing CELL in preparation for the time when every computer is linked to the Internet."



SPY

PS2 RELEASE SCHEDULE



MARCH

Batman: Dark Tomorrow
Club Football
Devil May Cry 2
Dr Muto
Galerians: Ash
Indiana Jones And The Emperor's Tomb
Indy Racing League
Jurassic Park: Operation Genesis
Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter
Malice
Pride FC
Rayman 3: Hoodlum Havoc
Rolling
Savage Skies
Splinter Cell
Tenchu: Wrath Of Heaven
The Lost
War Of The Monsters
Zapper
ZOE: The 2nd Runner

APRIL

Blood Rayne
Dark Chronicle
Dead To Rights
Def Jam Vendetta
Die Hard: Vendetta
ISS 3
Metal Gear Solid 2: Substance
Moto GP3
RTX Red Rock
Shinobi
Starcraft: Ghost
Wolverine's Revenge
WWE Crush Hour

MAY

A Sound Of Thunder
Black And Bruised
Eye Toy
Fire Warrior
Gladius
Hardware
Silent Hill 3
SOCOM: US Navy SEALs
Speed Kings
Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Raven Shield
June
Freedom: Battle For Liberty Island
Ice Nine
Red Dead Revolver
Return To Castle Wolfenstein
Rise To Honor
The Great Escape

JULY

Breath Of Fire V
Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon
Enter The Matrix
Tomb Raider: The Angel of Darkness

Category

Action Kemco
Football sim Codemasters
Action Capcom
Adventure Midway
RPG Agatec
Action/adventure Activision
Racing Codemasters
Strategy Universal
FPS Universal
Platformer Sierra
Beat-'em-up THQ
Platformer Ubi Soft
Extreme sports Rage
Action Bam! Soft
Action Ubi Soft
Action/adventure Activision
Adventure Ubi Soft
Action SCEE
Platformer Infogrames
Mech action Konami
Category Publisher
Action/adventure Universal
RPG SCEE
Action TBC
Wrestling EA
FPS Universal
Football sim Konami
Action Konami
Racing SCEE
Action/adventure Activision
Action SCEE
Action Universal
Action/adventure Activision
Driving/action THQ

Category

Action Bam! Soft
Boxing Universal
Camera game SCEE
FPS THQ
Strategy Activision
Online action SCEE
Survival horror Konami
Combat sim SCEE
Driving Acclaim
Action Ubi Soft
Category Publisher
Action/adventure EA
Action/adventure Bam! Soft
Action Capcom
FPS Activision
Action SCEE
Action/adventure SCI
Category Publisher
RPG Capcom
Beat-'em-up Ubi Soft
Action/adventure Infogrames
Action/adventure Eidos

PS2 RELEASE SCHEDULE



Soul Calibur II

True Crime: Streets Of LA
TBC 2003
Alter Echo
Area 51
Batman 2
Blow Out
Broken Sword: The Sleeping Dragon
Celebrity Deathmatch
Curse
Cy Girls
Destruction Derby 4
Dragon's Lair 3D
Driver 3
Ecks Vs Sever
Enclave
EverQuest Online Adventures
Evil Dead: A Fistful Of Boomstick
EXO
Falcone: Into The Maelstrom
Far Cry
Fear Effect: Inferno
Final Fantasy X-2
Four Horsemen Of The Apocalypse
Freaky Flyers
Frequency 2
Fugitive Hunter
Futurama
Ghost Hunter
Gladiator
Good Cop, Bad Cop
Gun Survivor 4
Judge Dredd Vs Judge Death
King Of Route 66
Lamborghini
Mafia
Mission Impossible: Operation Surma
My Street
NBA Ballers
NBA Starting Five
NBA Street 2
Pac-Man World 2
Pillage
Project BG & E
Project Manhunt
Pterosaur
Raging Blades
Resident Evil Network
Rygar: The Legendary Adventure
Seven Samurai
Shoot To Kill
Stargate & Hutch
Star Wars: Galaxies
Sukdemon III
This Is Football 2004
The X-Files
Tribes: Aerial Assault
Urban Freestyle

Beat-'em-up

TBC
Driving/action Activision
Category Publisher
THQ
Adventure Midway
Action Ubi Soft
Shoot-'em-up Majesco
Adventure TBC
Beat-'em-up Take 2
Adventure Wanadoo
Action Konami
Driving SCEE
Action Encore
Driving/action Infogrames
FPS Bam! Soft
Adventure Swing!
Online RPG TBC
Action/adventure THQ
Mech action Infogrames
FPS Virgin
Action Ubi Soft
Adventure Eidos
RPG SCEE
Action 3DO
Flight action Midway
Rhythm action SCEE
FPS Infogrames
Adventure SCI
Adventure SCEE
Beat-'em-up Midway
Adventure TBC
Light-gun game Capcom
Action Universal
Driving TBC
Racing Rage
Action/adventure Take 2
Action Infogrames
Party game SCEE
Basketball sim Midway
Basketball sim Konami
Basketball sim EA Sports
Platformer SCEE
RPG TBC
Platformer Ubi Soft
TBC Rockstar
Adventure TBC
RPG Wanadoo
Online adventure Capcom
Action/adventure Tecmo
Action Sammy
FPS Codemasters
Driving/action Empire
Online RPG Activision
RPG Konami
Football sim SCEE
Survival horror Universal
FPS Sierra
Extreme sports Acclaim

PSONE JANUARY TOP 20 GAMES

RANK	TITLE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER
1	Harry Potter Chamber Of Secrets	Adventure	EA
2	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	Sports	Activision
3	Treasure Planet	Adventure	Disney
4	FIFA 2003	Sports	EA
5	Digimon World 3	Adventure	Infogrames
6	Lilo & Stitch Trouble In Paradise	Adventure	Disney
7	Stuart Little 2	Adventure	Sony
8	Tomb Raider 3 & 4 Collectors Pk	Adventure	Eidos
9	Digimon Rumble Arena	Action	Infogrames
10	World Rally Champ 02	Arcade Racing	Sony
11	World's Scariest Police	Racing	Fox Int
12	Final Fantasy Anthology	RPG	Squaresoft
13	NBA Live 2003	Sports	EA
14	Jonah Lomu + WTC	Compilation	Codemasters
15	Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?	Family	Eidos
16	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 Ptm	Sports	Activision
17	Space Chase Pack	Compilation	Activision
18	Harry Potter & Philosopher's Stone	Adventure	EA
19	Final Fantasy IX	RPG	Infogrames
20	International Cricket Captain	Sports	Empire

PS2 JANUARY TOP 20 GAMES

RANK	TITLE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER
1	GTA: Vice City	Adventure	Take 2
2	Lord Of The Rings Two Towers	RPG	EA
3	Harry Potter Chamber Of Secrets	Adventure	EA
4	The Getaway	Adventure	Sony
5	Grand Theft Auto 3	Adventure	Take 2
6	Dragonball Z: Budokai Fighters	Action	Infogrames
7	Kingdom Hearts	Adventure	Disney
8	V8 Supercars	Racing	Codemasters
9	Cricket 2002	Sports	EA
10	Bond 007: Nightfire	Action	EA
11	WWE Smackdown 4 Shut Mouth	Sports	THQ
12	Medal Of Honor: Frontline	Action	EA
13	BMX XXX	Sports	Acclaim
14	Need For Speed Hot Pursuit 2	Racing	EA
15	Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon	Strategy	Ubi Soft
16	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	Sports	Activision
17	Ratchet & Clank	Adventure	Sony
18	Lord Of The Rings Fellowship	Adventure	Vivendi
19	FIFA 2003	Sports	EA
20	Sly Raccoon	Adventure	Sony

inform

Directs can be viewed at www.informbd.com.au as part of Inform's comprehensive database of online media intelligence, updated weekly.



www.au.playstation.com/sly



'No, I can't see him, officer'

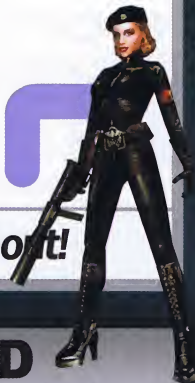
Born into a family of the world's great jewel thieves. His mission: to reclaim his family's honour and their stolen book on the secrets of thievery. You'll use more than muscle to help him outfox the law and outwit the bad guys. Bravery, deceit, cunning and stealth are his stock in trade. But remember, you're only human.



THE STEALTH PLACE THE SNEAKY PLACE THE THIRD PLACE
PlayStation 2

monitor

MONITOR CONTRIBUTORS: DAN TOOSE, TRISTAN OGILVIE, ANTHONY O'CONNOR, MARK WYATT



Previewing the new games you voted to read about!

WELCOME TO MONITOR!

SO WHAT'S ALL THIS THEN? Our pledge is to keep all the big games under constant surveillance, as directed by you! Whenever a cool new game bleeps loud on your radar, write to us – we'll dig up exclusive new screens, information and interviews with the creators, or bring you first impressions from playable code.

HOW DO I GET INVOLVED? To vote in our Most Wanted charts email us on OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au and we'll also look for comments from the official forums at au.playstation.com. Get voting now!

INFO BOX It's here you'll find out who makes a game, how complete it is, when it's due to hit the stores and if there's any more information online.

INFO BURSTS Keep an eye out for these blobs, where we'll drop in facts, rants, quotations, devil's advocate opinions and anything extra you should know.

LATEST SCREENS So how's the game looking? We show the hits of the future in all their visual splendour.



OPINION BOX What do we think of it so far? We reveal our thoughts and also include what you'd like to see in the game – visit the forums at au.playstation.com to get involved.

MOST WANTED

Which upcoming games do you want to see more of? Email or write to us and we'll uncover the latest details on your future favourites!

POSITION	GAME	WHAT?
1 ▲	TOMB RAIDER: ANGEL OF DARKNESS  OPS2 aren't sure if all the requests to see more on Lara's next games are out of love, or simply wondering how the release date has slipped again. We got her regardless.	ON LOCATION PAGE 22 EXCLUSIVE!
2 ▶	MGS2: SUBSTANCE  With this elusive stealth game slipping into April, OPS2 had a chance to give you one last solid serving of Snake.	NEW SCREENS PAGE 24 EXCLUSIVE!
3 ▲	FINAL FANTASY X-2  As we all start getting our head around the idea of a FF sequel, details have started sliding in. This should be in this Top 5 to stay.	NEW SCREENS PAGE 26 EXCLUSIVE!
4 NEW	TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA  With its obvious connections to both GTA-Vice City and the Getaway, will LA be the true crime capital of the gaming world?	NEW SCREENS PAGE 27 EXCLUSIVE!
5 NEW	SHINOBI  Many Ninja games have owed the original Shinobi much in terms of inspiration. Do Sega look likely to continue to inspire others?	HANDS-ON PAGE 28 EXCLUSIVE!

ALSO IN monitor THIS MONTH

MACE GRIFFIN: BOUNTY HUNTER.....	PAGE 30
TENCHU: WRATH OF HEAVEN.....	PAGE 32
RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN:	
OPERATION RESSURECTION.....	PAGE 33
RTX RED ROCK.....	PAGE 34
WAR OF THE MONSTERS.....	PAGE 35



Which forthcoming games would you like to see in Monitor next month? Visit the forums at au.playstation.com, email us at OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au (remember to put 'Monitor' in the subject line) or write by post to Monitor, Official PlayStation 2 Magazine, PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction, NSW 2002. Vote now!

monitor

ON LOCATION



NAME Lara Croft Tomb Raider:
The Angel of Darkness
PUBLISHER Eidos
DEVELOPER Core Design
WEBSITE www.tombraider.com
RELEASE July

PERCENTAGE
COMPLETE

80%

LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER: THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS

Missing: Presumed Unfinished. We unearth Lara Croft's latest.

BEEN A LONG TIME COMING HASN'T IT? Yes, but it will be worth the wait. At our recent sojourn to Core Design's HQ we witnessed a game with practically all the environments complete and a fully functioning Lara running, jumping and climbing around in them. And picking up a pad and playing the game is like being reunited with a long lost relative.

THAT NEW BLOKE, WHAT'S HIS STORY? Kurtis is the product of a tortuous and complex plot. Suffice to say that he's the descendant of the Knights Templar who imprisoned the evil Eckhardt (voiced by Joss Ackland) hundreds of years earlier. Now Eckhardt is free and trying to re-energise the ancient Nephilim and ultimately take over the world. Kurtis and Lara want Eckhardt dead and you get to play as Kurtis in a couple of lengthy sections, using his magic powers (an ability to see what's coming up) and his Chirugal, a kind of sharp frisbee which he can lock onto multiple targets and then release.

SO WHAT'S IT REALLY LIKE THEN? Imagine a really detailed, pin sharp, super high-resolution *Tomb Raider* and you've 80% nailed it. The major plus is the complete absence of blocks – the old *Tomb Raider* world was pretty much built from one-metre

square cubes. This has meant a real rethink about the way the game works. It's now impossible to clearly see scalable rockslides, or to know if Lara can make a jump or not. Most sections aren't so much 'corridors of scenery' as a section of Paris with all the streets, houses, rooftops and alleyways you'd expect. There are now countless ways of getting from one end to another – it really opens up the game. **|| DG**

opinion

PlayStation 2

TOMB RAIDER: THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS is caught between two particularly knotty stools: do something totally new or please *Tomb Raider* fans. Currently, it's erring on the side of familiar caution.



WHAT WE WANT

■ Something very 'Tomb Raider' but with a new vibe. Plus new puzzles, baddies, tasks and action.

WHAT YOU WANT

■ "All the excitement of the first time you played *Tomb Raider*," hopes an optimistic BloodOath.

WHAT THEY WANT

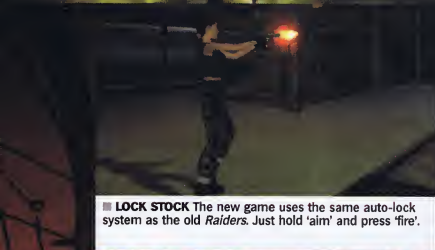
■ They're planning three *Tomb Raider* PS2 games, so they want the chance to make the next two...

HOT OR NOT?

FRIGID **TEPID** WARM **HOT** **BOILING** MELTDOWN



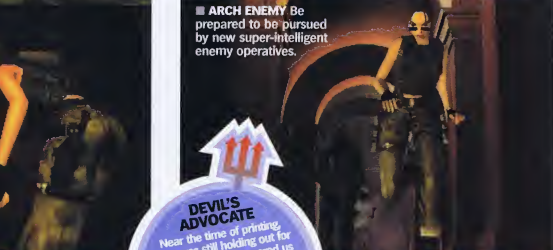
■ **KNIGHT CLUB** The old Knights Of The Templar provide Lara with a little target practice.



■ **STEALTHY OPTION** There's as much sneaking as there is gunplay this time around.



■ **IN THE PINK** Watch out for stunning real-time fighting and shadow effects throughout the game.



■ **ARCH ENEMY** Be prepared to be pursued by new super-intelligent enemy operatives.



DEVIL'S ADVOCATE
Near the time of printing, Core was still holding out for a Feb release. This scared us a little, because we're yet to see Lara properly engage any enemies in the game code to gauge how it really plays. Sure enough, the release date slipped to July.



■ **WALL FLOWER** Yes, there's still plenty of shimmying and wall-scaling to be done.

A TALE OF TWO CITIES

The game takes place in Paris and Prague. So just two locations then, but the action in each is impressively diverse.



THE STRAHOV COMPLEX

Yes, it's not all raiding tombs. The baddies' HQ provides Lara with plenty of laser-based traps and alarm systems to dodge.



PARIS UNDERWORLD

As well as action taking place on city streets there are huge subterranean areas to negotiate.



THE LOUVRE

Not an exact recreation (because use of all the paintings is a legal nightmare) but it features much of the internal architecture.



KRIEGLER CASTLE

The place where ultra-villain Eckhardt was imprisoned. Even to this day it is patrolled by the ancient Templar Knights.

THE TRANCING ROOM

This chamber beneath Krieger Castle is used by the bad guys for summoning up ancient evils. Enter at your own risk...

ADRIAN SMITH HEADBURST

A few Tomb Raider facts let slip by Core's Operations Director.



- Old Lara really murder her mentor at the start? You'll have to wait and see...
- There are going to be three Tomb Raiders. The Angel Of Darkness is the first part of a huge, three-game story.
- They've started work on the second game already and it should be out in November 2003. Yes, two Tomb Raiders in one year.
- There's a high degree of sexual titillation between Lara and new boy Kurtis.
- The Angel Of Darkness is not as big as the old Tomb Raider games but this is deliberate. The policy here is quality over sheer quantity. That said it'll still offer 23 to 35 hours of gameplay, though.
- There were to be four locations in the game but the sheer size of the story has meant cutting this down to two for this first game.

monitor

HANDS-ON

METAL GEAR SOLID 2

NAME MGS2: Substance
PUBLISHER Konami Europe
DEVELOPER Konami JPN
WEBSITE www.konamijpn.com/products/mgs2_sub
RELEASE April

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE 90%

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SUBSTANCE

Further impressions of Snake's meatier magnum opus.

YOU LOAD IT UP, WHAT'S THE DEAL? Disappointingly, the Intro movie is identical to *Sons Of Liberty*, but get past that and the differences soon become apparent. From the main menu, you've got a choice of 'New Game', 'Load Game', 'Options' and 'Specials' which all apply to SOL – here in its entirety with the only difference being the availability of a level select from the start – plus three new ones called, 'Missions', 'Snake Tales' and 'Skateboarding'.

WHAT DO THEY CONSIST OF? For 'Missions', you can choose either Raiden or Snake and then pick from three categories – 'Sneaking', 'Weapons' and 'First-Person View' mode. All of them are set in VR surrounds with the sole aim being to get to the exit in the shortest time, but the key is in how you do it – sneaking, via vents, lure tactics and rail hanging, or all-out blasting with SOL's full arsenal including if you're Raiden, the HF Blade. Things are slightly different for 'First-Person' mode as you must learn new controls and get to grips with manoeuvring your character in this previously stationary-only perspective – which at first feels completely wrong.

'Snake Tales' consists of five new scenarios for Snake set in the locales of SOL. With private-eye-style text intros setting the scene, snippets of info and mini-quests divulged as you go along – you never know how things are going to pan out when you undertake the initial missions. Very intriguing.

AND THE SKATEBOARDING? This separate section is a daft but entertaining bonus. Borrowing the game engine and the specially-modified Big Shell level from *Evolution Skateboarding*, Snake and Raiden have a series of goals to complete within the time – which involve racking up high scores and collecting objects. To be honest, the skating engine is no Tony Hawk's, but we must doff our caps to the excellent rock rendition of the MGS theme tune that accompanies the kick-flipping action. ☐ RB

opinion

PlayStation 2

MGS2: SUBSTANCE is the definitive version of an exceptional game. The new missions and modes add welcome bulk to an experience that was previously a bit short-lived.



WHAT WE WANT

More jugular-severing carnage with Raiden's fantastic HF Blade.

WHAT YOU WANT

Tribone153 wants to play as Snake in the Plant with his cool M4, from start to finish.

WHAT THEY WANT

For you to approach Substance as a whole new game, even if you already own MGS2.

HOT OR NOT?

FRIGID ☐ TEPID ☐ WARM ☐ HOT ☐ BOILING ☒ MELTDOWN ☐

CAN HE KICK-FLIP?

Yes he can. It's definitely not a joke, then - Snake-boarding explained!



GRAB

One of your goals is to score over 10,000 points. For this, you link-up your ramp tricks and land them into manual rolls to rack up those big-scoring combos. You can also collect coins.

GRIND

You also have to grind 150 metres worth of rails - so ollie up and slide every rail you see to meet your quota. Thankfully, some are exceedingly long, although you must ensure you remain balanced if you want the points to count.

SEARCH

Roll through the skater-friendly modified Plant to search for five missing dog tags and a secret item. The tags are spread out and tricky to spot, but we can reveal that the secret item is perched above an out-of-reach ramp.

DESTROY

There are three security droids that need neutralising and once you have triggered four concealed detonation devices, you can send one section of this mighty complex plunging into the icy waters.

■ **FE FI FO FUM** Gilly-man hides from a giant, mutant soldier of doom.

REVEALED! It's possible to unlock a new costume for Raiden - his birthday suit! Designed as an extra challenge, you can't hold weapons, tap walls or hang on rails because the poor chap has to constantly keep his hands clasped over his mini-Raiden-maker!

■ **'FIRSTY WORK** Playing the first-person missions takes some getting used to...

■ **'CREEP SHOW** There is no radar in the Alternate Missions, so the odds of getting spotted are increased.

WHAT'S THE ALTERNATIVE?

What can you expect from MGS2: Substance's Alternative Missions? We explain the sub modes.



1. BOMB DISPOSAL MODE

There are bombs hidden around the game's environments and you have a limited time to find and defuse them all with your handy spray gun.

2. ELIMINATION MODE

Screw all that sneaking around. In these scenarios you've got to take everyone out in the shortest time possible. With a sword if you like.



3. HOLD UP MODE

Once more, you're against the clock and have to successfully hold up a number of opponents. When you do, they magically cascade away...

4. PHOTOGRAPH MODE

A series of elaborate and challenging scenarios that test your brain power as you work out how to get the shots required.

■ HAVING A SLASH

Fancy eliminating baddies as the Ninja? Now you can.

HF.BLADE



NAME Final Fantasy X-2
PUBLISHER Square
DEVELOPER Square
WEBSITE www.playonline.com/ffx2
RELEASE Spring 2003

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE 70%

STORM WARNING
FFX-2 will play with familiar locations.



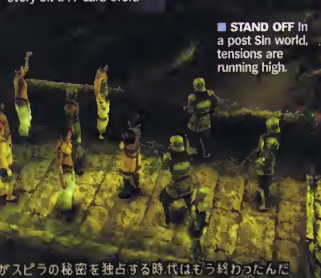
RISE OF THE MACHINES The people of Spira have started to use the new technology.



VILLAGE PEOPLE Could this be Kilika from FFX? The village was destroyed but has it been rebuilt?



SUMMONING STRENGTH With her new action pants and twin hand guns, Yuna is every bit a FF Lara Croft.



STAND OFF In a post Sin world, tensions are running high.

REVEALED!

In FFX-2 we won't see the return of the Sphere board. Experience will be gained in the more traditional way - by twirling things. Also, the battle system is being totally revamped. That means no Overkills or Overkills. What's in its place? We'll have to wait and see...

FINAL FANTASY X-2

Yuna goes all Lara in the first true FF sequel. OPS2 gets new screenshots.

SO THIS IS BASICALLY FINAL FANTASY X, RIGHT?

Wrong. Until now, Square has set each new Final Fantasy game in a unique universe, but with FFX-2 it's had a change of heart - gamers will be returning to the world and characters of FFX, two years after the events of that game. And it appears a lot more has changed than just Yuna's taste in threads.

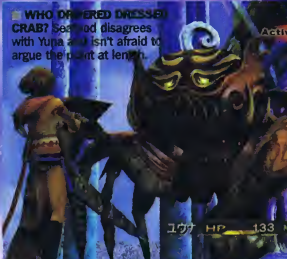
SO WHAT'S THE STORY?

Having defeated Sin, the demonic whale and über baddie in FFX, spirit summoner Yuna is revered by the people of Spira. But all is not well. For one thing, with the fall of the Yevon religion there has been upheaval as different factions emerge, each hoping for reluctant Yuna's patronage. For another, blue buddy Kimahri has discovered a sphere containing a vision of Tidus, the lost hero of FFX, trapped and desperate to escape. And so, with the help of Rikku who gives her that hotpants 'disguise' and a pair of guns (after FFX's climax Yuna can no longer summon spirits to fight for her), she heads out on an adventure to find and rescue Tidus, discovering a new and brooding menace along the way...

SO IS YUNA ALL ON HER LONESOME THIS TIME? Oh

no. As ass-kicking and action happy as Yuna appears

In these screenshots, she will have a couple of travelling companions to watch her back. Look closely at the FFX-2 logo. That's Yuna at the bottom of the image. On the left you'll see Rikku, Al Bhed mechanic and a familiar face from FFX. And then there's the blade-wielding figure on the right. Say hello to Paine, the moody, leather-clad new girl in FFX-2. We'll have more on the further adventures of Yuna soon. □ PF



WHO DIPPED DRESSER CRAB? Lost and disagrees with Yuna. Isn't afraid to argue the point at length.



THAT'S THE SPIRIT Yuna can't summon spirits any more, so what's happening here then?



opinion PlayStation 2

FINAL FANTASY X-2 introduces Yuna to guns and back-flips. Has the FF universe gone crazy? We don't think so. It's about time Square revisited familiar faces and locations.

WHAT WE WANT

■ Depth, beauty, brains and action in equal amounts. A less linear storyline would be nice too.

WHAT YOU WANT

■ Mr Moogles from the forums hopes Square don't rip off Tomb Raider too much. Fair call.

WHAT THEY WANT

■ To remind people that this is a full sequel and not just an add-on.

HOT OR NOT?

FRIGID TEPID WARM HOT BOILING MELTDOWN



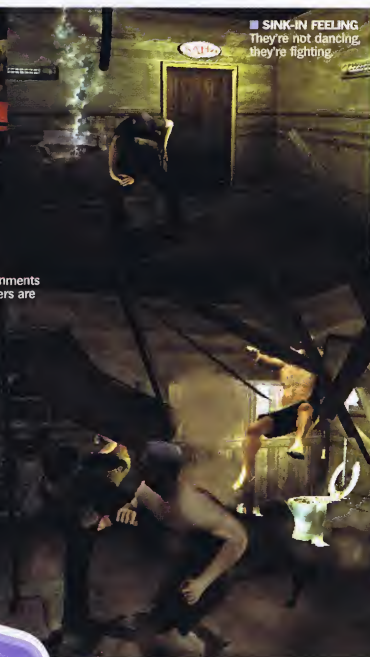


monitor

NEW SCREENS

NAME	True Crime: Streets Of LA
PUBLISHER	Activision
DEVELOPER	Luxoflux
WEBSITE	www.activision.com
RELEASE	July

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE **50%**



TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA

Latest screens of the game putting the Woo into woohoo!

IS IT A FIGHTING GAME OR A DRIVING GAME? It's both. If technical shootouts and accurately mapped driving action sounds good to you (and you're getting bored of driving around London in *The Getaway*) then listen up. As the screens on this page show, your time will be pretty evenly divided between high-speed chase missions and shootout/beat-'em-up action. As you can see, the lead character, rogue cop Nick Kang, is a bit handy at all of the elements. Shooting at gangland thugs is one thing, but taking them apart with a well-placed roundhouse is another level of satisfaction entirely.

IT'S LIKE A JACKIE CHAN FILM. WHAT'S THE STORY? Well, you play a detective with a grudge, dishing out his own sense of justice in LA's seedy underworld. The whole game has been heavily infused with a Hong Kong cinema feel. Remember John Woo's classic movie *Hard Boiled*? All of that cathartic action is here, including the trademark 'jumping with two guns' moves seen on this page. If Luxoflux can manage to combine that intense style with some real gaming substance, it'll have a sure-fire winner on its hands.

HOW DOES THE CLOSE COMBAT WORK? From what we can see, it looks as though a lock-on facility will play a part in tying the hand-to-hand and shooting action together. It looks pretty impressive at this point, a hybrid of *Vice City*'s targeting system and *The Getaway*'s eye for detail. If it can perform as well as it looks, we'll be in for a treat next year. ☐ MW

opinion PlayStation 2

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA

TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA would have been revolutionary this time last year. But coming after several similar games, its Hong Kong influence should make it stand out from the crowd.

WHAT WE WANT	WHAT YOU WANT	WHAT THEY WANT
■ A game that adds to the multi-discipline gaming experience, not just <i>The Getaway</i> in LA.	■ Forunite KANE79 has concerns that <i>True Crime</i> may be crossing too many genres to play well.	■ To create an original game by adding a different sense of style to the action.

HOT OR NOT?

FRIGID TEPID WARM HOT BOILING MELTDOWN



Shinobi

NAME Shinobi
PUBLISHER SCEE
DEVELOPER Sega Overworks
WEB SITE www.sega.com
RELEASE April - May

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE 90%

SHINOBI

Evisceration on your PlayStation 2? Well, if the sword fits...

ONIMUSHA 3 ANYONE? Hardly. Here, we're feeling a staunch arcade vibe. This game is about fighting and puzzles be damned. We're told at the outset to expect 'scenes of violence and gore', and by the gods that's what we get. Blade unsheathed, it's a case of slashing, leaping, clanking, and carving. And under this kind of onslaught, foes such as ninjas, devil dogs and winged skulls fall to bits. Literally. With true swordcraft we cleave them clean in half - legs will fall one way, torso the other, body-juice a-spraying. Yaki

MMMM. MUST FEEL GOOD, RIGHT? Heavenly. Hotsuma, that's you, is an agile fella, prancing about, dancing off walls, springing over chasms, his huge red scarf trailing some yards behind. Indeed, this peculiar elongated neckerchief is, initially, one of the most visually arresting things about the game. Pressing **□** pops the targeter into life and this proves vital when taking on multiple assailants, but for real mondo-cool, the Stealth Dash is unparalleled. For a short time Hotsuma can rocket invisibly out the way of attacks, leaving behind an opaque ghost of himself. It's a beautiful touch, yet on a practical level, very important when up against end-of-level-bosses. Jump, rocket, turn, lock-on, slice, rocket out the way of a missile - it verges upon the sexual.

SOUNDS THE MONEY? Yeah. Controls are intuitive, the atmosphere and the plinky-plonky Oriental soundtrack are spot on while the enemies are (at least during the first few levels) pleasurably easy to dismiss. It's good-looking, old-skool franticness and your brain is definitely not invited. **□ SP**

opinion PlayStation 2

SHINOBI boasts a simple premise, exquisitely presented. With no defend button, this game's ethos is spelt out plain and simple. Cut, thrust and dodge through a storm of sensibility-shaking gut-splat.

WHAT WE WANT

■ A lightning fast Onimusho without the bothersome gift-swapping.

WHAT YOU WANT

■ Zenhachirou on Dante Vs Hotsuma: "Dante is a fairy, my money would be on Hotsuma."

WHAT THEY WANT

■ To create a button-hammering thrill-kill in a cyber-oriental Matrixesque setting. Only with swords.

HOT OR NOT?

FRIGID **TEPID** WARM **HOT** BOILING MELTDOWN



■ **KNIFE WORK** You look a little on the fey side, but you've got a shockingly brutal way with cutlery.



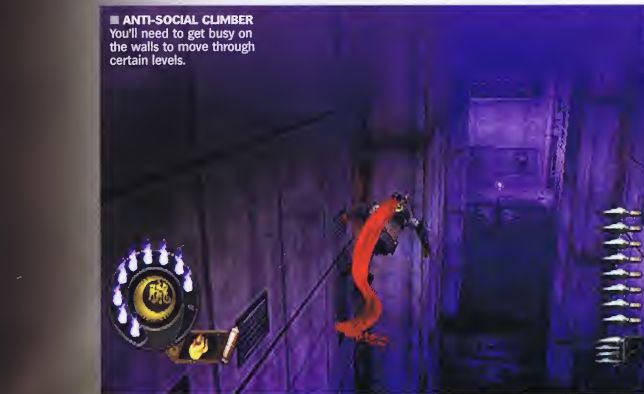
■ **GONE TO PIECES** Go bastardo with your cleaver and your foes will lose the power of being a single entity.



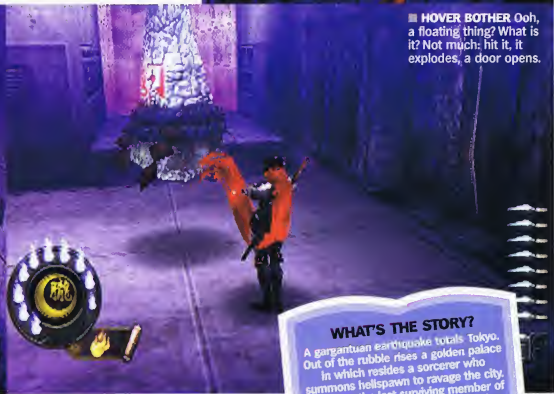
■ **FEMME FATALE** Lady-chick shows up, spouts story guff and buggers off leaving you with more hacking to do.



■ **WALL CRAWLER** Take to the vertical surfaces to stab sticky devils.



■ **ANTI-SOCIAL CLIMBER** You'll need to get busy on the walls to move through certain levels.



■ **HOVER BOTHER** Ooh, a floating thing? What is it? Not much: hit it, it explodes, a door opens.

WHAT'S THE STORY?

A gargantuan earthquake topples Tokyo. Out of the rubble rises a golden palace in which resides a sorcerer who summons hellspawn to ravage the city. Hotsuma, the last surviving member of the Oboro Clan, sets out to save the city and kick wizard arse.

CHOPPER VS ER... CHOPPER

It's you and your sword against a huge gunship. No fair! But Victory can be achieved if you know where to pop your blade.



WAIT FOR THE ACTION

At the close of the first level it's you against a helicopter gun-craft. Oh, and teams of rabid ninjas.

BE ON YOUR GUARD

It's a good idea not to ignore the sprouting ninja lads — they'll creep up from behind and sword your physique.

EASY DOES IT

Use your brilliant Stealth Dash to weave amongst them and plant a blow on the hell's nose.

RUN LIKE HELL

When the chopper's about to unleash its missiles, it's best to simply leg it smartish.

YOU MADE IT...

Beat the gunship's nozzle enough times and its health bar dies. Cue explosive cut-scene and pat on back.

monitor

NEW SCREENS



NAME Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter
PUBLISHER Universal Interactive
DEVELOPER Warthog
WEB SITE www.hunthendown.com
RELEASE March

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE 50%



MACE STATION Space combat is just as important to learn as rifle skills.



FACE TO MACE When up Mace, have a stare.

KNEES UP He's big, he's angry, he's alien. But a shot to the knee will leave him crying like a little baby.

SPACED OUT Look out for debris and evildoers.

MACE GRIFFIN: BOUNTY HUNTER

Not just a bloke looking for chocolate bars in outer space.

NOT JANGO FETT AGAIN? No, not that Bounty Hunter. Yes, you're an inter-stellar tracker of bad guys and mercenary of sorts. No, you don't have a really cool mask. You play Mace Griffin, a man on the path to vengeance via various deep-space flying and FPS missions. As the screens on this page show, action is divided up pretty equally between space combat and interiors. Check out Mace, he's sort of a Han Solo meets Clint Eastwood character. A world-weary but charismatic space wayfarer out for justice.

WHO WILL WE BE KILLING THIS TIME? Everything and anything. As you can see, the Vagner System that forms the game's backdrop is populated by many varied races. Some are armed, some are organised, some are both. From insectoid aliens to fervent religious sects, there's plenty to work your way through. They populate the rich world of the space stations and structures that you get to investigate, and it's up to you to finish each particular mission by any means necessary. Here's a hint: it's usually by shooting people or blowing stuff up.

WHICH WEAPONS CAN WE SEE HERE? A variety of firepower is available. From long-range stealth kills

made easy by a futuristic sniper rifle, to simply blowing your foe into small alien chunks, there will be many options available to you. It's all about choosing the right tool for the job. There are sonic rifles, grenades, remotely activated bombs, shotguns, big handguns and plasma pistols, all of which dispatch your enemies in great-looking ways, adding to that overall sense of satisfaction. **□ MW**

opinion PlayStation 2

MACE GRIFFIN: BOUNTY HUNTER looks to be a strong addition to the world of space shooters. It'll need to blend its gameplay elements effectively to convince hardened gamers, though.

WHAT WE WANT

■ A shooter that provides real variety in gameplay as well as interactive worlds.

WHAT YOU WANT

■ There's nothing on the forums yet, but now you know about the game, share your thoughts online!

WHAT THEY WANT

■ A game that tussles with the best first-person shooters and space flight sims out there.

HOT OR NOT?

FRIGID **TEPID** WARM **HOT** BOILING MELTDOWN



MACE IN THE HOLE Interiors will be detailed and immersive.

HALL MONITOR Action varies from deep space freedom to close corridors and futuristic fortresses.



MR BURNS With such great weapons you'd be forgiven for indulging.

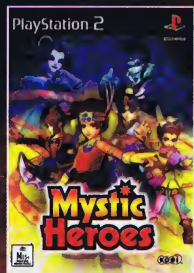
SPIDEY SENSE Whether on two legs or eight you'll need to be ready.

FLIGHT VISION Space combat sees you take on small and large enemies.



Born to Battle!

Fight masses of enemies with a variety of techniques, including magical rune attacks! Create your own fighting style, combining magical and physical attacks!



Mystic Heroes™

AVAILABLE MARCH 2003



Mystic Heroes and the Koei logo are trademarks of Koei Co., Ltd. © 2003 Koei Co., Ltd. All rights reserved.
THQ and its logo are registered trademarks of THQ Inc. All rights reserved.
"PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

PlayStation®2





NAME Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven
PUBLISHER Activision
DEVELOPER K2
WEBSITE www.activision.com/games/tenchu3
RELEASE March

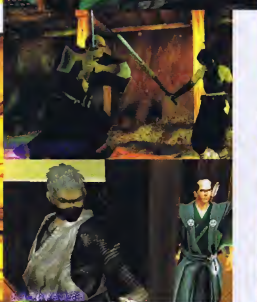
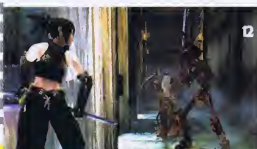
PERCENTAGE COMPLETE 90%



■ **GIRLY ACTION** Despite how it looks, this isn't a dating sim.



■ **SPLIT IN TWO** Two-player mode cleaves the screen in two halves.



NINJAS FIGHT ALONE... OR NOT!

A great feature of the game is the multiplayer options. These include the traditional versus mode and the more intriguing Co-op mode. Tag team stealth kills? Oh yes, indeed.



■ **HARD HITTING** Stealth, shm stealth. Violence works.



■ **TIRED OR WIRED?** His eyes suggest it's one or the other.



TENCHU: WRATH OF HEAVEN

The stealthy ninja stylings of Tenchu sneak onto the PS2...

SO HOW DOES THIS DIFFER FROM THE PSone

TENCHU TITLES? Basically the respected, but uneven, ninja franchise has been given an extensive overhaul for its conversion to the black box. Issues such as camera related frustration that plagued the first two titles appear to have been dealt with in this third outing. The addition of a 'Lock on/Autoface' button helps keep enemies on screen and in view, where they should be, freeing the player to go about the business of quietly slitting throats and skulking in the shadows.

GENUINE NINJA EXPERIENCE OR JUST A HACK-EM-UP WITH PYJAMAS?

Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven has made a real effort to give the player a 'genuine' ninja experience. Levels are finished by using stealth and cunning, combined with athletic skill and problem solving rather than just brute force. Certainly this is a claim that many games have made before, often falsely, but *Wrath* appears to genuinely deliver the goods. Players who execute perfect stealth kills are awarded with bonuses and can build up their character's attributes and gain special abilities, adding an almost RPGish layer of depth to the proceedings.

WHY IS THIS THE NINJA GAME FOR YOU? Despite some hefty competition from similarly themed games, *Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven* is looking mighty

compelling for a variety of reasons: Three playable characters, all with different stories, fighting styles and objectives, a range of special powers and gadgets that span from the surreal to the deadly, genuinely satisfying and brutally gory stealth kills and a compelling narrative all combine to form quite a tidy package. The only real disappointment is that the graphics currently aren't as polished as one might hope for from a next-gen title - but in a game that potentially could play like *Metal Gear Solid* with ninjas, this is a minor quibble indeed. **A/C**

opinion

PlayStation 2

TENCHU: WRATH OF HEAVEN looks set to become a stealth-em-up that actually manages to mine some depth from the overused ninja genre. Slightly drab graphics aside, this is a quality marriage of strategy and slaughter.

WHAT WE WANT

■ A challenging and immersive adventure that keeps you on the edge of your seat.

WHAT YOU WANT

■ Forunite Mase has been hoping for tag-team stealth kills in multiplayer. They're there!

WHAT THEY WANT

■ To transcend a mere slasher and create a true Ninja simulator.

HOT OR NOT?

FRIGID ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐ ☐



monitor

NEW SCREENS



NAME Return to Castle Wolfenstein
PUBLISHER Activision
DEVELOPER Raster Productions
WEBSITE www.activision.com/games/wolfenstein/
RELEASE April

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

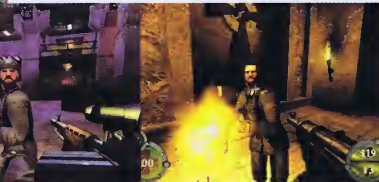
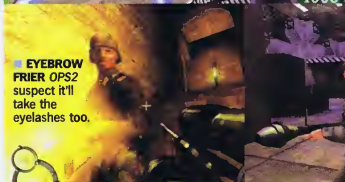
80%

■ TERRIBLE VIEW
Looking down the barrel in more ways than one!



■ COSTUME PARTY An extensive WWII wardrobe is on show.

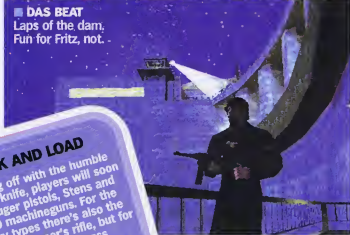
■ EYEBROW
FRIER OPS2 suspect it'll take the eyelashes too.



■ FACT AND FICTION
You face a mix of normal troops and fictional freaks!



■ DAS BEAT
Laps of the dam. Fun for Fritz, not.



RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN: OPERATION RESURRECTION

It's packed with big guns, Nazis, undead mutants and gritty WWII action, and we've got the screens to prove it.

WHAT'S A WOLFENSTEIN? Well, OPS2 is pretty sure it's not a beer chugging fox. If this game doesn't ring any bells then you really need to hit those history books. *Return To Castle Wolfenstein* is the sequel to *Wolfenstein 3D*, the granddaddy of all first-person shooters. Sure, its graphics engine struggled to render the same one metre of wall texture endlessly, and there weren't any floor or ceiling textures at all, but no one missed them because you couldn't look up or down anyway. As for the gameplay, it was as simple as a fourth generation inbred bumpkin but it paved the way for everything we play now, so show some respect.

SO IT'S A PRETTY BIG CASTLE THEN? While the original PC version of *Castle Wolfenstein* took place purely inside the famous Deutsch castle, the PS2 game isn't quite as agoraphobic, taking the action out into the big, bad war. Players will be able to blast away at Nazi scum all the way from the trenches of Norway to the deserts of Egypt. The PS2-specific missions take place before the events in the current PC title and focus on Agent One, who, sadly, took a few to many bullets to the head in the opening scenes of the original game.

WHERE DO I POINT MY GUN? Being set during World War II, it should come as a surprise to very few that most of the time is spent taking pot shots at Nazi soldiers. The developers apparently lost their history books, because after the Nazi levels everything from zombies, mutants and leather-clad German temptresses start appearing. Thanks to a very rose-tinted view of 1944's technology, it's also been possible to include some Nazi cyborgs for target practise. ☐ NP

LOCK AND LOAD

Starting off with the humble combat knife, players will soon find Luger pistols, Stens and the MP40 machineguns. For the sneaky types there's also the FG42 paraatroopers rifle, but for the ultimate in mass destruction you can't go past the Venom chalmug.



opinion PlayStation 2

RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN: OPERATION RESURRECTION may not have all of the online multiplayer options of its PC brother but it still looks set to play brilliantly, and the additional levels sure won't hurt either.

WHAT WE WANT

■ Some better graphics. C'mon boys, we know the PS2 can push more polys than this.

WHAT YOU WANT

■ Flt. of the North hopes "the broadband adapter comes out so I can smash my mates."

WHAT THEY WANT

■ To give Red Faction 2, TS2 and 007 a good run for their money, and they just might get there.

HOT OR NOT?

FRIGID TEPID WARM HOT BOILING MELTDOWN

monitor

NEW SCREENS



NAME RTX: Red Rock
PUBLISHER LucasArts
DEVELOPER LucasArts
WEBSITE www.lucasarts.com/products/rtx/
RELEASE April

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE 75%



■ **MAKING CONTACT** With either a "hello," or a laser blast.

SEEING QUADRUPLE

No he hasn't been knocking back lines of the hard stuff. Wheeler's bionic eye allows him to switch to Thermacan, hinting to switch to Thermacan, hinting to switch to Thermacan. Electronic vision modes can be used to locate items in nearby rooms or panels and doors that are invisible to the naked eye.



■ **PUZZLING** Detailed environments make for better puzzle elements.

RTX: RED ROCK

Lifting the lid on LucasArts' first non-Star Wars game in light years.

IS THE FORCE STRONG IN THIS ONE?

Not this time. Tired of dealing with dull drones and whiny Jedi, LucasArts has looked to the famous Amie Flick, Total Recall, for the inspiration behind RTX Red Rock. Both adventures deal with ancient relics that hold the key to saving Mars colonies, but Red Rock throws in plenty of grubby aliens to kill. While it may not be down with the force, the graphics engine powering this game has more muscle than Arnold Schwarzenegger and better looks than Sharon Stone.

RTX MUST BE GEORGE LUCAS' NEW HOME

CINEMA SETUP? Wrong again. 'RTX' is the nickname given to the hyper elite Radical Tactics Experts. These boys are the special forces soldiers of the future. They spend their life training to develop the problem solving smarts of MacGyver, the detective skills of Batman and the shooting skills of a veteran Time Crisis 2 player.

WHO'S THE GUY WITH THE FUNKY LOOKING

GREEN MONOCLE? He's Eugene Wheeler, the biggest, baddest RTX soldier of them all, and he's on your typical mission to save the galaxy. The human colonies on our sunburnt planet Mars are under attack from a rogue group of aliens and Wheeler is in charge of pest control. Packing a Go-Go-Gadget arm, Wheeler can morph his bionics into a variety of destructive weapons. As well as the welcome laser gun and grenade launcher upgrades, Wheeler's hand can also be fitted with a taser for the wussy types who prefer bug spray of the non-

lethal variety. Our hero can even strap on a grappling hook to help him reach higher sections.

WHAT ABOUT THE LOVE INTEREST? Unfortunately there's nothing but virtual reality kissy-kissy in this game. Wheeler's only steamy moments take place in his head, where he flirts with the plucky female personality of his Independent Removable Information System (IRIS). Things improve a little when he plugs IRIS into computer terminals, allowing him to ogle her holographic curves, but it's hardly anything to get excited about. Good thing this isn't a soppy romance novel because, while the love story is wafer thin, using IRIS allows Wheeler to take control of any utility robots nearby and solve some tough puzzles. □ NP

opinion

PlayStation 2

RTX RED ROCK is refreshingly original. Rather than falling back on *Slim Deathstar 4000* or *Empire Earth Strikes Back*, LucasArts has created a new franchise with interesting features that haven't been seen before in 50 other games.

WHAT WE WANT

■ The choppy frame rate to be fixed up and the camera angles to be improved.

WHAT YOU WANT

■ Dante17 says "one of those rotating chain guns would be awesome"

WHAT THEY WANT

■ To provide an action-packed sci-fi epic that will keep brain cells working for at least 20 hours.

HOT OR NOT?

FRIGID TEPID WARM HOT **BOILING** MELTDOWN



■ **NOT A RAVE** But there's loads of colourful lighting



■ **LOOK ALIKE** "Yeah, folks always mistake me for the guy in the Intel ad."





MONSTERS FIGHT DIRTY!
Pretty much anything in any level can be smashed, picked up and lobbed at your opponent. This includes helicopters, boulders and oversized sword!

WAR OF THE MONSTERS

Big Monsters brawl! Things explode! Joy!

WHAT'S THE STORY? Very little, actually. In the grand tradition of drive-in epics such as *King Kong Vs. Godzilla* and *Them!*, *War of the Monsters* has a premise as simple as a can be: You select a monster. You fight other monsters. You frequently demolish entire cities in the process. The game is basically the demon offspring of arcade classic *Rampage* and a *Tekken*-style beat-'em-up, but instead of tiny arenas or dirty caged pits as your fight venue, *War* lets you have the run of the town. This leads to some damn dirty fighting as not only can the monsters breathe fire/energy/lazers but they can also use objects such as tanks, cars and chunks of building to batter their opponents. It's not in every fighting game that a well executed uppercut can knock out not only your enemy but an entire apartment building as well.

WHAT MONSTERS CAN YOU BE? The monsters in *War* are obvious homages to the classic creatures of the cinematic era when Ray Harryhausen's stop-motion special effects thrilled the world. Congar, the giant ape, Preytor, the praying mantis from *Hell and Togera*, the *Godzilla* clone are just three of the vastly different and bizarre creatures that make up the hugely inventive, if slightly small, fighting pool. Unlike more generic fighting games each of these monsters are unique and significant time has to be taken to master them all. It's just as well then that as much effort has gone into the level design as the titular combatants themselves. Not only are the levels large, but they often

monitor

HANDS-ON

NAME: War of the Monsters
PUBLISHER: SCE
DEVELOPER: Incog Inc. Entertainment
WEBSITE: www.scee.com
RELEASE: March

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE: 90%



feature hidden surprises beneath their destructible surfaces. The Vegas-style level for instance includes a Medieval themed casino where a huge replica of the legendary sword Excalibur can be rent from the ground and literally jammed into the chest of your hapless foe.

DO BEASTS ALONE A GOOD GAME MAKE? At this stage *War of the Monsters* looks like a lot of destructive fun but not much more. Sure scaling buildings and hurling yourself at giant robots and Aztec demons is gleefully wanton and the Arcade, Endurance, Multiplayer modes and unlockable mini-games certainly keep things interesting in the short term. However a rather paltry selection of fighters and somewhat simplistic combat raises questions about whether *War* has the staying power to be more than a gimmick game, albeit a damn entertaining one. We'll know real soon ■ **A/C**

opinion

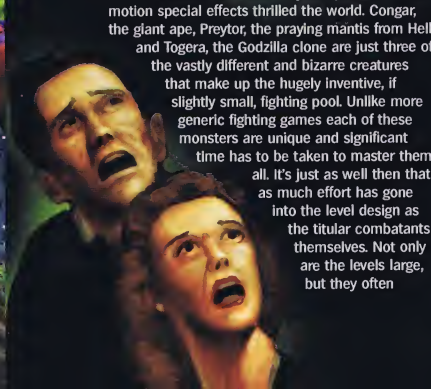
PlayStation 2


WAR OF THE MONSTERS is a brash and irreverent fighting game that oozes charm. Its inherent lack of depth may irk those after something really engaging, but those craving the schlock of Jap monster flicks are in for a real treat.

WHAT WE WANT	WHAT YOU WANT	WHAT THEY WANT
■ A 'Create your own Monster' option! Think of the possibilities!	■ James R. from WA pines wants to recreate classic monster battles like Godzilla vs. Mothra.	■ A sleeper hit that will catch on due to its obvious cult appeal.

HOT OR NOT?

FRIGID TEPID WARM **HOT** BOILING MELTDOWN





KING KONG
Chun Wah believes that
The Getaway has been
well worth the wait.

GETAWAY BLOKE!

CHUN WAH KONG

The Getaway's Lead Designer sings like a canary.

The Getaway has stolen almost four years of your life – now it's over, does it seem worth it?

Yeah, totally. I've been involved in games for almost ten years so I know how infrequent opportunities like this are – they don't come around every day so I value that a lot.

What was the hardest moment during the whole saga?

We used to have so many meetings that sometimes you'd think: "Shouldn't we just get on and make the game?" Looking back they were worth it, but we used to sit there just playing through the whole game. We had a meeting every Monday and for the rest of the week the boys would go and fix whatever problem arose or add new features. They were pretty grim days, though... ten bodies stuck in a small room for an entire day.

"A LOT OF THIS PROJECT WAS DEPENDANT ON TECHNOLOGY"

The code only really seemed to come together late in the development process – were you panicking as the deadline drew nearer?

I was always confident it was going to come together, but a lot of things on this particular project were very much dependant on the technology. It has been a mammoth task getting everything to happen at the same time.

We noticed you had mattresses in the office. Does it take a particular kind of mentality to withstand the long hours required during 'The Crunch'?

Absolutely. It's by no means an easy job – you need to have dedication. Unless you're really into games it's very hard, for me at least, to understand why people want to work in the industry.

Do the constant Vice City comparisons bother you?

No, we're great fans. When GTAIII came out last year a lot of us played it and loved it. Brendan (McNamara, The Getaway's Writer and Director) is friends with Sam Houser over at Rockstar and I used to hear them chatting on the phone all the time. There are real similarities between the games but I really think the differences are far more obvious.

What would you like to see more of in The Getaway 2?

Well we've obviously been pushing the game and film elements, and I'd like to see more of both.

What about including some sort of online element, where you might be a member of a gang fighting a turf war? Going home in a taxi every night at three in the morning, your mind drifts and you think about what you could potentially do in the next one. We've got loads of ideas, but whether it's online or not is up to SCE. I just want the same support, time and resources – because I'm not really that keen on rushing a game out.

How's the beard coming along?

Well I don't have one, but there's quite a high beard count at Team Soho. Around ten percent, maybe. **TC**

CURRICULUM VITAE

Name: Chun Wah Kong
Job title: Lead Designer, Team Soho
Nationality: Hong Kong Chinese
Date of birth: 06/08/74

Gameography:
1994 *Maximum Carnage*
(Acclaim)

1995 *Separation Anxiety*
(Acclaim)

1995 *Cutthroat Island*
(Acclaim)

1999 *Lander* (Psygnosis)

2002 *The Getaway* (SCEE)

Hobbies:
Videogames, cooking

Favourite directors:
Wong Kar Wai,
Cameron Crowe

Favourite author:
Haruki Murakami

Favourite band:
Chemical Brothers

TEAR IN FOR 15% OFF THE LATEST & GREATEST PS2 GAMES

No trade in required.



Rip out this ad, get instore and score a further 15% off our already low prices on these titles.

GAMES CLASSIFICATIONS: G - General (all ages); G+ - General (8 years and over).

M15+ - Mature (recommended for persons 15 years and over).

MA15+ - Restricted (restricted for sale to persons 15 years and over, unless accompanied by a parent or guardian).

Cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer.
Offer ends 18 March 2003.



MYER


GRACE BROS

Tom Clancy's SPLINTER CELL™

In Shanghai, a crack dev-team have secretly been building a better stealth-sim... OPS2 travel to China to de-classify this amazing PS2 project.

EVERYONE BUYING OR reading this magazine is almost certainly an owner of a PlayStation2 and very happy with their choice of console. Even though the PS2 clearly dominates the video game market, no one has been able to ignore the millions of dollars Microsoft has spent over the past year promoting its Xbox console.

While the system is new and powerful, what's really important is the games themselves and Xbox has suffered from a lack of exclusive 'must have' games. When Tom Clancy's *Splinter Cell* emerged just before Christmas, Microsoft did its best to promote the hell out of it as a game that could only be played on Xbox. The big secret was that Xbox only had exclusivity for 2002 and a PS2 version had been in production for months and would be ready in early 2003.

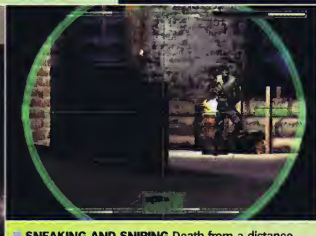
Splinter Cell has now been confirmed for a late March release, and the good news for PS2 owners is that they will be getting a game as good as, if not better, than the Xbox version. Thanks to the Microsoft advertising blitz everyone has already heard of *Splinter Cell* but even without that help-factor it would have been one of the biggest PS2 games of 2003.

If you know nothing about it at all, and love games like *Metal Gear Solid 2* and *Deus Ex*, then you are in for a real treat here. Tom Clancy's *Splinter Cell* is a visually stunning third-person perspective stealth/action game that takes the player on an engrossing journey into the world of spying and special operations forces.

Tom Clancy, the popular American spy novelist, is such a big

name in books, movies and now games that his name appears in the full title of the game. His imprimatur ensures that the underlying plot is a solid geopolitical espionage thriller, and that all weapons and spy gadgets used are realistically possible (as opposed to currently available).

The action takes place in 2004 in a world not unlike this one, with the United States trying to rein in "rogue states" by whatever means necessary.



Responding to the growing use of sophisticated digital encryption to conceal potential threats to the United States, the NSA (National Security Agency) has created a top-secret initiative dubbed Third Echelon.

The U.S. government denies its existence but Third Echelon deploys elite intelligence-gathering units that consist of a lone field operative supported by a remote team. You are field operative Sam Fisher (gruffly voiced by Michael Ironside, who has appeared in *V* and *Total Recall*) called upon to leave your daughter and go back into action after two previous agents were lost in the former Soviet Republic of Georgia. →



UPGRADED TO PS2

A PALTRY THREE MONTH WAIT FOR A SUPERIOR GAME IS SO WORTH IT

SOME XBOX OWNERS laughed and said it *Splinter Cell* couldn't be made for the PS2, but you'll be able to show them they were wrong in a month's time. As for changes and enhancements from the Xbox version, well there are quite a few. In fact, so many that Xbox owners may want to play this version instead.

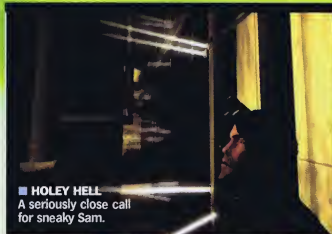
For a start there's 30 minutes of new cinematics and a new 4 minutes CG Intro movie (fully 3D), including music recorded for the game by the famous Prague Orchestra. A new Intro may not sound like a big deal but this is an awesome cinematic taster of the action to come and really does set the scene well.

The most important addition is a whole new mission that takes place at a power plant, which fits in seamlessly with the other 10 missions. Getting through the power plant means 4 levels and around two hours of gameplay, with Sam getting a whole new outfit as well – a snowsuit which is adapted to the snowy outdoor environments (some nice new snow effects are used here too).

There's a new gadget available from the start, with Sam being able to use binoculars with his goggles so he can observe guards or cameras better from a distance and thus avoid them better. Even if an alarm does go off, you will now be able to see the number of alarms

you need to avoid activating before 'mission failure' with a small on-screen Indicator. You will also have direct access to the key pad/lock pick, rather than have to go through the inventory.

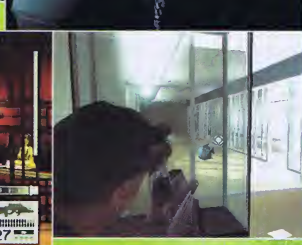
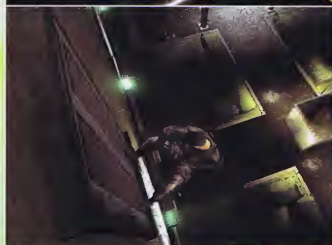
There is some change in level design (i.e. doorways in different places) and there's the welcome addition of mid-level checkpoints (which will save much frustration). There's also a higher difference between the two levels in difficulty of the game (Normal and Hard). Any standard of game player should be able to work their way through Normal and have fun, whereas Hard will test the skills of the dedicated gamers. ■



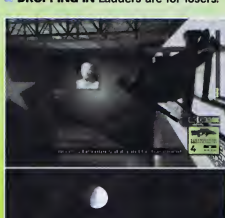
■ **HOLEY HELL**
A seriously close call for sneaky Sam.



■ **ARACHNOPHOBIA** That's just overly cautious Sam.



■ **DROPPING IN** Ladders are for losers.



■ **GLAMOUROUS?**
"I just signed up for the gizmos."



■ **PRECISION** No shooting from the hip here.

→ While the game starts in Georgia, Fisher will eventually travel the world in a search for answers but you must leave no trace on the physical or political map. Fisher, like all Third Echelon *Splinter Cells*, is granted the use of the Fifth Freedom – unprecedented latitude to safeguard America's security by any means necessary. This of course means killing people and while there are times when killing is unavoidable, most of the game is based around stealth and lurking in the shadows.

And lighting and shadows is what makes *Splinter Cell* so special and differentiates it from other

games of this type. Sam will have to stay in the shadows if he wants to succeed and keep an eye on a meter to see how visible he is to enemies. Dynamic real-time lighting effects are all the way through the game, plus some pre-rendered vertex coloured light, and it all looks a treat. The shadows are particularly impressive, and most lights you see are 'breakable' – either by shooting the bulb out or simply by turning the light switch off.

Night vision and thermal vision (both easily accessed through your goggles) also play a crucial role in the gameplay. Night vision allows you to see what's happening even

when in the darkest corner – you can see a guard stumbling around with his arms out when the lights get blown – while thermal vision lets you check for mines in the ground and for signs of life at a distance.

Even though *Splinter Cell* is actually built on the now aging *Unreal* game engine there have been so many refinements that it is basically unrecognisable. There are the now obligatory mirror and reflection effects for glossy surfaces, but also a very cool 'soft-body' effect for realistic movement of flags and curtains (which can be used to hide behind). In other graphical effects, there's depth blur on both thermal and night vision (objects are clearer the closer they are) and focus blur in sniping mode (only the focused object is clear, the other parts are blurred).

The sound is also impressive enough to warrant a mention, with triple-streaming from DVD enabling simultaneous voice, ambient sound and theme based music. Dolby

Surround ProLogic II is supported and overall it sounds superb, adding lots of atmosphere to the action on screen.

But all these special effects are just icing on the cake, as the levels are well-designed and Sam controls well and has loads of cool moves. He might not be able to crawl (he moves nicely while crouched), but he can take hostages, shoot while hanging from a pipe, rappel down walls and the best move – the split jump. With either leg bracing him between two walls, Sam can hide above enemies and wait until they pass underneath before dropping down to knock them unconscious.

While it may be compared to *Metal Gear Solid*, *Splinter Cell* is very much its own game and is a fresh take on the now popular stealth action genre. It's looking great on the PS2 and with only bug testing and final refinements to go, should be perfect for the late March release date. This one's gonna be big! ■



■ BACK AGAIN
Reporting in Shanghai,
we just had to take a
second look at this pic.

INTERVIEW

**DOMITILLE DOAT:
UBI SOFT SHANGHAI,
PROJECT MANAGER
FOR SPLINTER CELL PS2**

WHAT WERE THE MAIN CHALLENGES IN MAKING SPLINTER CELL ON PS2?

There were many issues working on such a game – brainstorming sessions, testing new programming techniques, troubleshooting and finally you get a breakthrough. The programmers were working with one main focus: to plan and create an engine that contains everything that's possible to give the maximum design tools and freedom to artists and level designers.

This was not so much a conversion problem, rather the level we wanted to reach at the end of the project. This was the main pressure for us, wanting to make a game of such high standards.

WHY GO TO EXTRA EFFORT OF MAKING NEW CINEMATICS?

What is really important for the PS2 (in comparison with the Xbox audience) is to immerse the player from the very first minute he puts the DVD in his console until the end. The player needs to be Sam, to feel as if they are this black ops agent operating in diverse situation and settings.

The feedback we received about the Xbox version was that the intro and cinematics were good but that they were not really at the same level as the rest of the game. So we decided to change all cinematics and the intro to improve it. This would not only hook the player more immediately but also give a new cinematic identity to the PS2 game.

WHY DID YOU CHANGE SOME LEVEL DESIGNS FOR PS2? AND WHY ADD BINOCULARS AND ALARM COUNTER?

There were many good reasons to alter some level designs. The main one is that the PS2 and Xbox are far too different just to have the same game

on both consoles. Thanks to player feedback, journalist opinions and also our own critics in the Shanghai team (most of the PS2 team did not take part to the Xbox development), these changes are slight but they are there to tune the gameplay.

For example, adding the binoculars sounds like a small detail but the effectiveness of this gadget for the gamer is quite obvious. During playtesting, as soon as this feature was implemented the gamers were using it all the time to master infiltration: checking camera movements, guard patrols and so on without being detected.

The alarm counter came out as a natural addition after having played the Xbox version. Some players would trigger an alarm and then pass a checkpoint. If they took a break from playing, saved and then returned later, they would have forgotten how many alarms they had triggered so it is more of a handy feature for the gamer than a real design change. This also applies to direct access to weapons, gadgets and the interact options. They were obvious improvements to make given the extended time allowed during the PS2 development.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF IN SPLINTER CELL PS2?

I like the way you can try different things to get through a mission. Sometimes you'll throw a can to create distraction and sneak behind the guards, sometimes you'll use the distraction camera gadget, and sometimes you'll wait until a guard is all alone to knock him down and hide his body – there is always a clear goal but I like to try different things to achieve the missions. With all the gadgets and special tricks, it provides tonnes of possibilities. You must find the best one for your style of play. ■

UBISOFT CHINA

A PLAYSTATION 2 GAME BEING DEVELOPED IN A COUNTRY WITHOUT PLAYSTATION 2?

SPLINTER CELL HAS been in production for the PS2 since February 2002 in the Ubisoft production studios in the heart of the booming city of Shanghai, China. The French based publisher Ubisoft has the largest game development studio in China, which is the fastest growing economy in the world at the moment. Starting up in 1997, the Ubisoft Shanghai studio has already produced 20 titles, including *F1 '99* and *Rayman 2* for the PSone and *Ghost Recon* for the PlayStation2.

Until very recently China was infamous for being a haven for copyright violators (i.e. pirates) with copied CDs, videos, DVDs and games being commonplace. But joining the WTO (World Trade Organisation) means that the Chinese government is now officially cracking down on pirates and more game companies are likely to open up shop in the world's most populous nation. The PS2 will hopefully be officially released in China late in 2003.

Piracy will remain a problem in

China for some time though as *OP2* discovered on a tour of the Ubisoft Shanghai studios. Only a walk away from the skyscraper office building was an alley full of dealers openly (and often insistently) selling pirated DVDs (such as *LOTR: The Two Towers* and *Gangs of New York*) and games, including copying devices. While PS2 piracy was not much in evidence, there were boxes of PS2s on the shelves, so it seems that the PlayStation has already unofficially landed in China by popular demand. ■



INTERVIEW

SPLINTER CELL PS2 CO-PRODUCER DOMITILLE DOAT FROM UBISOFT'S PRODUCTION STUDIO IN SHANGHAI, CHINA

WHAT HAVE YOU SET OUT TO ACHIEVE WITH SPLINTER CELL?

We have one unique ambition - provide to the PlayStation 2 gamers the most surprise they can have in 2003.

WILL THERE BE ANY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE PS2 AND OTHER VERSIONS OF SPLINTER CELL?

The consoles are different in their performances and in their public. What is sure is that the trademark will always be kept along the different platforms: lights and shadow effects will serve the game play as much as they serve the consumers' eyes.

What is really important for the PS2 is to immerse the player the very first minute he puts the DVD in his console till the end: the player need to die to play Sam, to be Sam, to feel the same as being this black ops in these most diverse situation and settings. Create this kind of Immersion is a hard work because every details and elements of the game need to be perfect so that there is nothing that disturbs the player from being Sam, having as much tension and blood pressure as Fisher. This is all we are aiming at.

Also regarding the previous already released platforms versions, the audience is not the same so we worked with the permanent care to fit with the very high PlayStation 2 audience expectation and skills.

Working on PlayStation 2 to really push immersion to the maximum: this first means to work on the cinematics, but we also developed some camera effects when a dead body is found to raise the tension of the game play. We had fun working on some levels where we reserve surprises for the gamers, I will not detail them now but they are some good surprises...

To conclude: we did not work with the Xbox in mind, we worked with the PlayStation2 competition in mind and PS2 gamers' expectations. In mind, this is very different. I really insist on this point because few gamers have double equipment - we don't work for the comparison sake we work for the enjoyment of the PS2 community.

OBVIOUSLY SPLINTER CELL IS A GAME THAT STRONGLY FOCUSES ON STEALTH AND ESPIONAGE, SO WHAT KIND OF SNEAKY ABILITIES WILL BE AVAILABLE TO THE PLAYER? WHAT KIND OF SNAZZY MOVES CAN THEY PULL OFF TO STAY OUT OF THE WAY OF GUARDS?

Fisher is in perfect shape, the range of moves he can perform is really

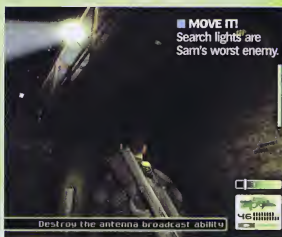
important and one of the features that make a real difference versus competitors. What is interesting with all the moves that Fisher can perform is that they always seem perfectly realistic but impressive. For Sam's moves, we wanted to walk a line in between realism and more cinematic action.

He can perform everything the gamer would expect a highly trained agent could perform; this includes mixed actions like shoot when rappelling, split jump and shoot, split jump and then drop attack for the most original. These last ones are really enhancing the power the player feels when he plays as Sam. Our Objective is to provide moments to the player when he surprises himself with what he is doing

thermal-vision. We are now finalizing the glow effect around all the characters to have the whole aspect looking smooth and nice and add blur in the background also to bring a real sense of perspective.

The final step is to make sure the environment is perfectly in line with what the gamer can expect to be: heater needs to be hot, fridge to be cold and, last but not least, dead bodies need to get colder and finally disappears.

HOW INTELLIGENT WILL THE AI BE IN SPLINTER CELL? WHAT KIND OF ACTIONS AND REACTIONS CAN WE EXPECT FROM ENEMIES? WHAT KIND OF 'MEMORY' WILL THEY HAVE? WILL THEY BEHAVE REALISTICALLY IN COMBAT?



GIVEN THAT FISHER HAS A WIDE VARIETY OF MOVES AVAILABLE, WHAT KIND OF CONTROL SCHEME HAVE YOU GOT PLANNED TO MAKE PERFORMING ALL THESE MOVES AS EASY AND INTUITIVE AS POSSIBLE?

We are obsessed with making sure the gamer instinctively find his way on the pad to perform his actions. We are pretty confident to have found a real instinctive use of the pad, it is currently being tested by our focus group department and you will be able to appreciate them with the demo.

WHY HAVE YOU CHOSEN TO USE A GREY FILTER FOR THE NIGHT VISION?

It looks really nice and the light and shadow effect are much more interesting and detectable for the gameplay. It also brings a specific touch to Splinter Cell in the Tom Clancy catalogue.

DID THE THERMAL VISION GENERATE A LOT OF PROBLEMS? HOW DID YOU PROCEED?

The thermal vision is a very tricky part of the programming part; the model of Sam you see in normal vision was not adapted at all on PS2 when turned in thermal vision: he was looking like some kind of liquid character almost cartoon! We changed Sam model when turned in

The base of a Tom Clancy game is realism so we are doing everything possible to have the most realistic behavior from enemy and NPC.

We push their animation and reaction in this way: for instance if you turn the lights off, the NPC will walk blind and put their hand in front of us looking for the light or orientation. They have interesting conversations that are useful to record: they have different stages of alarm, and if they believe to have seen something or heard something they will come and check before shooting. If they found a body, they will trigger the alarm. They will not shoot at you if you have taken one of them as a human shield... their behavior is coherent and realistic.

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE MAJOR PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED WITH THE AI?

The most difficult part of the job is of course to remain as credible, realistic and natural as possible in the NPC reactions when the game offers a total freedom of moves and actions. That's the hardest!!!

Reaching perfection is likely not possible... as there is always a new situation that the gamer can create or that just a few persons can think about ... which may bring to the fore some imperfections. ■





Meet the world's most notorious drivers on the streets of LA, Paris, and Tokyo.



Choose from the latest performance enhanced vehicles and compete to make a name for yourself.



There are no rules - drive anywhere in the city. Find the fastest route to win.

"(An) insane urban racing experience... it's ultra-illegal stuff that you've dreamed of doing."

- PSM DECEMBER 2002.



"PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Online play requires internet connection and Network Adaptor for PlayStation®2 (sold separately). The Online Icon is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. Rockstar Games, Rockstar San Diego and the R* logo are registered trademarks of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. All rights reserved.





湾岸 *MIDNIGHT CLUB II*

The Future Of Illegal Street Racing

LOS ANGELES / PARIS / TOKYO



The Midnight Club is now open to motorbikes. Take advantage of the speed and control - but watch out, a wrong move will send you flying.



The cops know you are out there - don't get caught.



Use tricks to gain an edge or just to show off. Style is almost as important as winning.

COMING SOON

WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/MIDNIGHTCLUB2

XBOX
LIVE

PlayStation 2

online
BROADBAND ONLY

PC
CD ROM



WORDS: STUART DREDGE, DAN TOOSE/PHOTOGRAPHY: TIM LEVY, GAVIN ROBERTS

SOUND AFFECTS

More and more gamers are upgrading their PS2s to take advantage of full surround sound. OPS2 gives you the lowdown on how to join the audio revolution.



Games are mostly a visual experience. Getting the best out of your PlayStation 2 is about hooking it up to a decent TV with the best AV cable you can. But what about sound? Many gamers are happy to put up with their TV's weedy, built-in speaker. Okay, so some people have hooked their PS2s up to a hi-fi using an optical cable for proper stereo and extra volume. But you can push your PS2's sound much further. Remember the last time you went to the cinema and the sound rushed at you from all directions? Well, you can get that from your PS2 if you connect it to a home cinema system. Welcome to the world of surround sound.

WIRED FOR SOUND

A home cinema system basically consists of a receiver unit which takes the audio output of your console and processes it into surround sound. This is funnelled out to five speakers around your room (see Perfect Placement) and a subwoofer, which provides the bass. Traditionally, these kind of systems have been for serious home cinema buffs to watch their DVDs with, but they've recently come down in price. You can now get a decent home cinema system for around \$600. The benefits are obvious. Not only do you get to enjoy surround sound while watching DVDs on your PS2, but – thanks to an ever increasing number of developers optimising their titles to take advantage of the technology – you can experience surround sound gaming too. See System Playtest for OPS2's 'five of the best'.

Besides cost, another thing that's put many PS2 owners off buying a surround sound system is the number of different technologies that are available. You'll be pleased to hear that they're not too confusing after all – there are only three that you need to know about: Dolby Digital, DTS and Dolby Pro Logic II (see Glossary). With many home cinema systems supporting all three formats, it's not as intimidating as it used to be. You need the same five-speaker setup for each, regardless.

An increasing number of big PS2 games have some form of surround sound support, including the likes of *Burnout 2*, *GTA: Vice City*, *WRC II Extreme*, *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4* and *SSX Tricky*. Once upon a time, developers simply weren't given the budget to put surround sound in their games. That's changing.

"Dolby Pro Logic II should now be standard across all AAA titles," reckons Stephen Root, Criterion's Head Of Audio. Criterion's software division is doing its bit by including Dolby technology in its Renderware development tools, making it easier for developers to include surround sound in their games.

AUDIO SLAVE

The three surround sound technologies explained.

DOLBY DIGITAL

Surround sound format that produces five separate audio channels: right, left, centre, left surround and right surround, plus an extra bass-only channel for your subwoofer. Full surround sound, in other words. However, using it takes loads of processor power that would otherwise be assigned to other parts of a game engine. For this reason, its use on PS2 is generally restricted to non-interactive cut-scenes.

DTS

A rival technology to Dolby Digital, with similar roots in the cinema world, DTS can be used for in-game sound without taking lots of processing power away from other parts of a game engine. Although it's featured in fewer games than Dolby Pro Logic II, it's recently been utilised in big titles such as *GTA: Vice City* and *SSX Tricky*.

DOLBY PRO LOGIC II

A much more processor-friendly version of Dolby Digital, which is why it's used for in-game surround sound on PS2. It allows developers to encode five audio channels into a regular stereo signal. A Pro Logic II software decoder then extracts this into five channels again, giving you simulated surround sound. This is the most popular surround sound format for PS2.



Enough about the technology. What does surround sound add to your gaming? For most titles it's purely an atmosphere thing. Developers are constantly striving to create more immersive games, and surround sound is a major new string to their bows. It can be as simple as hearing a car you've just overtaken recede into the distance behind you, or being engulfed by the roar of the crowd in a virtual football stadium.

Surround sound sucks you into a game, enveloping you in sound and making you forget the outside world. Close your eyes and you're in *Vice City*, not sitting in your living room playing a game. "It enables you to capture the ears of the player by enveloping them with 360° sound," says Root, who is backed up by Dolby's games guru Jack Buser. "It really delivers a cinematic experience, which is what a lot of games are going for these days. It can be a very powerful thing emotionally, drawing players inside a game."

Sometimes, surround sound has an impact on the gameplay itself. Think first-person shooters, for example. "Ideally, when you play the likes of *Unreal Tournament*,

RIK EDE, DTS CONSULTANT

**"IN UNREAL TOURNAMENT
YOU COULD HEAR SOMEONE
COMING UP BEHIND YOU, SPIN
AROUND AND SHOOT THEM"**

you'd be able to hear someone coming up behind you, and you could then spin around and shoot them," says audio expert and DTS Consultant Rik Ede.

It's going to be even more of an advantage once online PS2 gaming kicks off. Imagine playing *TimeSplitters 3* with surround sound. If your opponents don't have it, you'll be able to track them by listening to the direction their gunfire is coming from, but no-one will be able to creep up on you. Your foes will be toast, and they probably won't even know why.

Rik Ede also hopes developers will make more use of surround sound in solo games in the future. "When you start to get audio cues in the game, it'll get really exciting," he says. "Imagine you're playing a game and you're stuck in a room with no obvious way out, but as

you walk around the room, there's a big thud coming from the subwoofer at a particular point in the floor. It's a trap door, and there's your way out, yet you can't actually see it. Developers are already playing around with these kinds of ideas."

It sounds great, but not much fun for gamers who don't want to fork out for a five-speaker home cinema system. Don't worry – Dolby has a couple of new technologies up its sleeve that could help. The first is Dolby Headphone, which provides surround sound in a set of ear-cans. The first of these headphones will be out later this year. "You buy this little headphone unit, plug the optical cable from your PS2 into it and away you go," says Buser.

Meanwhile, Dolby is also working on a technology called Virtual Speakers, which uses fiendishly complex audio bouncing technology to get surround sound out of two normal stereo hi-fi speakers. This might not make any difference to PS2 gaming, but could be a built-in feature on the next generation of consoles. Watch – and listen to – this space.

SYSTEM PLAYTEST

OPS2 recommends five home cinema systems that will give you perfect PS2 surround sound.

*1 THRUSTMASTER 5.1 SOUND SYSTEM HOME CINEMA (\$400)

This tidy speaker kit has been put together with the console gamer in mind by a company that has made gaming peripherals for so long, this seems like a natural progression. Besides delivering good sound for a fairly small satellite speakers, this unit does the lot in terms of surround sound with the exception of DTS. It comes with a digital optical cable, meaning its ready to plug straight into your PS2. These cables (known as TOSLINK) are pricey for what they are, so this is a bonus in a relatively cheap bundle. To complete the kit, there's even a remote. A good bundle all round. www.thrustmaster.co.uk

*2 ALTEC LANSING - XA3051 5.1 (\$350-400)

It's another sound system made with gaming consoles in mind, with thoughtful additions like colour co-ordinated RCA connectors making setting up quickly a snap. Great if your console moves about the home.

The speakers can be turned on their base, so aiming them at a central point from varying heights works fine. Most importantly, they push out a good sound for their size.

Now for that catch, despite the '5.1' in the name, be aware that it does not support Dolby Digital 5.1, just Pro Logic. Fine for the majority of PS2 games, but not if you want to have all bases covered. www.innovision.com.au

*3 SONY HTK-25 HOME CINEMA SYSTEM (\$999)

SCE might not sell an official surround-sound setup, but why not go for a system from the consumer electronics arm of the company? Sony is one of the most trusted home cinema brands around, and its HTK-25 system shows why.

Its five speakers are absolutely tiny, yet manage to produce a hefty sound nonetheless. The system can handle Dolby Digital, DTS and Dolby Pro Logic II, so will cope with whatever games you throw at it. And you even get the extremely practical adjustable wall, ceiling and shelf mounts. Bargain. www.sony.com.au

*4 JVC TH-A30 DIGITAL CINEMA SYSTEM (\$899)

This home cinema system costs a bit more, but you're getting an all-in system with a DVD player for your money. We like the mirrored front and sleeky electric blue lighting. Happily, it sounds as good as it looks, and even works well when you turn the volume down.

Besides handling Dolby Digital and DTS, the receiver is also something of an all-rounder. It's able to play DVDs and CDs, as well as CD-Rs and CD-RWs, if you've, ahem, burned some of your favourite MP3s onto a disc. Oh, and it's an FM/AM tuner, too. www.jvc-australia.com

*5 DENON AVR-1603 RECEIVER/ELAC CINEMA 1 SPEAKER SYSTEM (\$2,200 IN TOTAL)

You don't just need to look at all-in-one systems for PS2 surround sound. Pay a little more to mix and match and you could get something like this. The receiver is Denon's AVR-1603, which provides high-end home cinema for \$799, including support for DTS, Dolby Digital and Dolby Pro Logic II. Denon's more expensive kit is what real hi-fi and home cinema buffs swear by, so you're in good company.

Meanwhile, the speakers are from German firm Elac. The five surround speakers are tiny silver things that still pack a great sonic punch, while the subwoofer is teeth-rattlingly good for bass. You might balk at the idea of paying \$1399 for a set of speakers, but believe us, you're getting plenty of value for your money. If you've got plans to own a quality component based AV system, a receiver and speakers are a good place to start. www.denon.co.uk & www.elac.com

*4



*5



*3



PERFECT PLACEMENT

How to set up your speakers for great surround sound.

CENTRE SPEAKER

Place this above or directly below your TV set – this speaker is often used for character speech and sound effects, which need to sound like they're coming out of your TV.

RIGHT AND LEFT FRONT SPEAKERS

Place these as far apart as possible, to create a truly cinematic surround effect.

LEFT SURROUND AND RIGHT SURROUND SPEAKERS

These need to go behind you, to the right and left. Ideally, they should be the same distance apart as the right and left front speakers, to create an accurate surround effect.

SUBWOOFER

Can go anywhere in the room, so try a few places to see how it sounds. You'll know it's right when your teeth start rattling...



*2

LISTEN AND LEARN

What else can your PS2 do with surround sound?

Hook your PS2 up to a home cinema system and you can play DVDs as God Intended. Practically every DVD release comes with a Dolby Digital or DTS soundtrack. It's also great for live music DVDs – we've recently been blistering our ears to the 5.1 mix of Iron Maiden's *Rock In Rio*.

Talking of music, record labels are getting interested in a new album format called DVD-Audio, which involves releasing albums mixed for surround sound. You need a dedicated DVD-Audio disc player to get the full monty, but some DVD-Audio albums include additional surround sound mixes that can be played using your PS2. You'll need to visit a sizeable record store to find them, though.

LOOK HEAR!

So which titles will allow you to get the most out of Dolby surround sound gaming?

The games you can buy now that support Dolby surround sound gaming...

[PUI: Dolby Pro Logic 2, S: Dolby Surround]

Airblade	...	S
Armored Core 2: Another Age	...	S
Blood Omen 2	...	S
Burnout 2: Point Of Impact	...	PUI
Defender	...	PUI
Dynasty Warriors 3	...	S
Extreme-G 3	...	S
F1 2002	...	S
FIFA 2001	...	S
FIFA 2002 World Cup	...	S
Final Fantasy X	...	PUI
FreekStyle	...	PUI
Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	...	PUI
Klonoa 2: Lunatek's Vell	...	S
Knockout Kings 2001	...	S
Madden NFL 2001	...	S
Madden NFL 2003	...	S
Matt Hoffman's Pro BMX 2	...	S
Medal of Honor: Frontline	...	S
Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons Of Liberty	...	S
Minority Report	...	PUI
Need for Speed: Hot Pursuit 2	...	PUI
NBA Live 2001	...	S
NHL 2001	...	S
Pirates: The Legend Of Black Kat	...	S
Primal	...	PUI
Ratchet & Clank	...	PUI
Rayman Revolution	...	S
RC Revenge Pro	...	S
Run Like Hell	...	S
Sled Storm	...	S
Sly Raccoon	...	PUI
Spider-Man	...	PUI
Soul Reaver 2	...	S
Star Wars: Bounty Hunter	...	PUI
Star Wars: Jedi Starfighter	...	S
Street Hoops	...	S
Terminator: Dawn Of Fate	...	PUI
The Bouncer	...	S
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3	...	S
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	...	PUI
Turok Evolution	...	S
Twisted Metal: Black	...	PUI
Wipeout Fusion	...	PUI
Vexx	...	PUI

And a taste of 2003 releases featuring Dolby surround sound...

Armored Core 3	...	PUI
Dr Muto	...	PUI
Evolution Snowboarding	...	PUI
Final Fantasy XI	...	PUI
Jurassic Park: Project Genesis	...	PUI
SOCOM: US Navy SEALs	...	PUI
Tribes: Aerial Assault	...	PUI

BLING in the RING

WORDS: PAUL FITZPATRICK/SAM RICHARDS



Def Jam Vendetta is the game EA hopes will make WWE wrestlers look like a bunch of candy-ass also-rans. OPS2 flew to New York to talk with the stars and the developers of the game touted as the hip-hop Fight Club.



"Look at my knuckles." So far as invitations with potentially unpleasant consequences go, it's a phrase right up there with 'pull my finger'. Of course, it doesn't help that the

person asking has already expressed a willingness to "f*ck you up" too, even if that was only in a videogame brawl. Still, that's what happens when it enters our head to ask Capone – rapper on legendary hip-hop label Def Jam records and soon to be 'virtual' fighter in EA BiG's new underground grappling game *Def Jam Vendetta* – if he can handle himself in a real scrap. Reluctantly, OPS2 contemplates the knuckle vista. It's like a mountain range with rings on. "I've been fighting all my life," Capone tells us a little redundantly, "Street fighting. I don't fight fair." And to think, there were some suits at EA who initially thought that a videogame marriage between wrestling and hip-hop culture just

wouldn't work.

The road to *Def Jam Vendetta* started last year when WWE bought out its rival WCW, effectively forcing EA to lose its

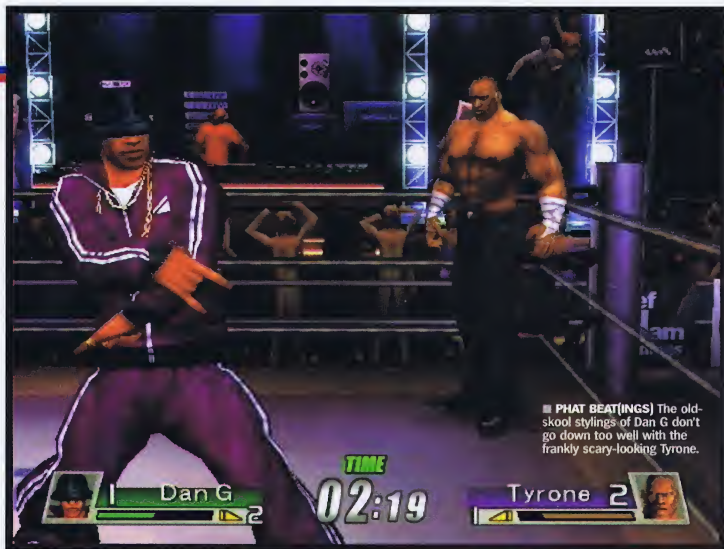
licence with the latter in

the process. Keen to keep making wrestling games, EA's idea bods started brainstorming. *Def Jam Vendetta*'s Executive Producer, Stan Chow takes up the story: "We had a lot of creative misfires. We had intergalactic wrestling, gladiator wrestling, Las Vegas wrestling... The last thing we wanted was to have a wannabe wrestling title without a licence. Then the idea for hip-hop wrestling came up. We saw how the audience for

RAP SCRAP

AS FAR AS INVITATIONS WITH POTENTIALLY UNPLEASANT CONSEQUENCES GO, IT'S RIGHT UP THERE WITH 'PULL MY FINGER'

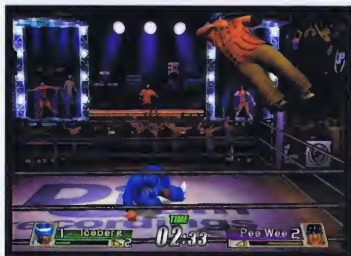
■ **RHYTHM METHOD**
Method Man is just one of the Def Jam artists appearing as a grappler in *Vendetta*.



■ **PHAT BEAT(INGS)** The old-school stylings of Dan G don't go down too well with the frankly scary-looking Tyrone.



■ **YOU'RE NUTSI** Drake, a former NBA Street character, appears in the game as an Eminem-styled brawler.



■ **DROP THE BEAT** As you'd expect from an EA BIG game, the moves and fighters in Vendetta are stylishly OTT.

hip-hop really overlapped with the gaming audience, so we thought, if we could somehow link the two, as crazy as that seemed, it would be a great thing. Hip-hop and Def Jam are synonymous, so we pitched it to them and now we're here."

"Here" is New York City. A sound stage in Sony Music's studios on the upper West Side to be precise. It's here that Def Jam Vendetta is being showcased to the American games press, your very own OPS2, and the hardcore likes of NORE, Capone and Method Man, who along with eight other Def Jam artists will appear as unlockable boss characters in the game. Having first survived a close-up of Capone's bling-encrusted fist and then finding out that he sometimes plays as Scarface in the game, it's high time we got to grips with Def Jam Vendetta ourselves.

RING PEACE

From the moment the first cinematic kicks in, there's no doubt who's behind this game. From the funky arenas to the 'super realism' of the character design, this is vintage

EA BIG. But there's a harder edge, too. It could be Redman's vocals rumbling like a juggernaut over the action. Then again, it could be wince-inducing finishing moves being meted out by fighter after fighter. Vendetta may have an arcade look but damn! It's brutal, too.

That brutality is largely due to EA's canny collaboration with AKI, the veteran wrestling game developer. AKI is the Japanese games maker responsible for a whole slew of grappling titles over the years, most notably, fans' favourites WWF Wrestlemania 2000 and No Mercy on the N64. EA may be the driving force behind Vendetta but it's AKI who is bringing the whupass courtesy of its finely tuned game engine. Lead Animator, Mike Ferraro, elaborates: "We have art directors who've been drawing pictures and sending them over, and AKI interprets them and add to them. But mostly we've been driving the creative effort and AKI has been executing our plans. They've already done tonnes of wrestling games so we've trusted them to animate the wrestlers."

Which brings us to the game's story. Aware that punters might not instinctively 'get' a wrestling game featuring Def Jam rappers, EA has created a story-driven Single-player mode. It's a good thing really, because not only does it explain exactly why your on-screen character is having six shades of crap knocked out of him by DMX and Ludacris, but it also creates the means for us to unlock

Def Jam Vendetta



■ **SAR FLY** The fight rings aren't in your usual dingy arenas.

Def Jam President

Def Jam Records President, Kevin Lyle talks to OPS2.



Was Def Jam looking to make videogames before EA came to you with Vendetta?

We've always been thinking about it because we share the same audience. The problem was, we don't do games. So instead of failing on our first try we decided to partner with somebody who'd give us validation and vice versa. They could have gone out and got anyone to become part of the game, but they said let's go and get the best of the best.

So you know your games then?

Me? I'm a gamer! I play every single day. I'm not as good as Josh [Holmes, Vendetta's Producer] but I play a lot of games. And the artists all own PS2s. And now, because we've got this relationship, I'm calling EA every day. "Get me the new Medal Of Honor. Get me the new NBA Live!"

Was it difficult to get the artists to agree to be in the game?

It's hard as it is to get them to make an album. It's the same thing. We had to get them into the studio to do their moves, but when one of them got into it everybody started to get into it. I got artists who are mad at me right now because they can't be in the game!

Are you in the game?

Let me put it like this. Personally I'm not in it, but my fictional character is D-Mob. I'm the boss. And I will whip anybody's ass if they try to fight me.

Are there going to be any original Def Jam tracks in Vendetta?

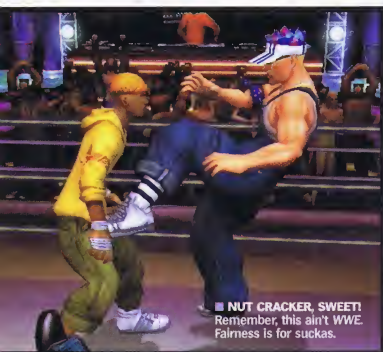
Yes. We've got four of them right now. But there's going to be a single by Method Man. A video and everything. It's going to be the lead track from the game.

Is Vendetta just the beginning for Def Jam in games?

Yes. We're already talking about Vendetta 2 while I'm still trying to get my fourth quarter albums out! We have meetings in about two months where we'll sit down and discuss Vendetta 2. We want to take the foundation that we built and really take it somewhere where people don't expect it to go. I plan on having more brands involved. If I can get Cash Money Records, Eminem, or any other artists involved, I'm actually going to have them with their own levels in the game.

Let's get this right, you're the best gamer at Def Jam Records? Yes. You let everybody know that. If any of the artists tell you they can beat me, you tell 'em I'll whip their ass in any game that they bring to me. I'm the best gamer.

Def Jam Vendetta



NUT CRACKER, SWEET!
Remember, this ain't WWE.
Fairness is for suckas.

Q + A

"I'M GOING TO BE THE ILLEST CHARACTER IN THE WHOLE F*CKING GAME!"

Method Man talks Vendetta with OPS2.



So, we understand you like your videogames. I'm a gamer's gamer.

Describe your fighting style in Vendetta.

I'm more of a technical type of wrestler. More of a grappler than a brawler. I'm going to be the illest character in the whole f*cking game.

Did you get much input with creating your fighting moves?

I explained certain moves that I wanted to do. And I knew 'em by name because I watch wrestling, you know? And I've seen some of the moves in there. I've got to say the game is dope. More than I expected. Way better than I expected.

So tell us, are you as handy in a real fight as your character is in Vendetta?

Yeah, as a matter of fact, DMX's character is pretty dope. Redman's character, too. And Manny. Manny is the one I played with first, so I'm pretty particular to him.

Do you rate any of the other fighters in the game?

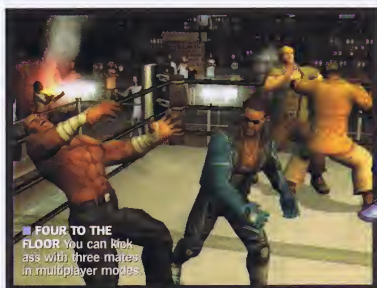
Yeah, as a matter of fact, DMX's character is pretty dope. Redman's character, too. And Manny. Manny is the one I played with first, so I'm pretty particular to him.

If you could have a videogame made just for you, what

it would probably be a simulation game. Sort of like The Sims, but it would have to be about the business. You'd start from a small independent label and you'd blow up to this big ass, f*cking world dominating record label. Just like that.



WHO, ME? Pick your fights carefully. Think you can teach this guy a lesson?



FOUR TO THE FLOOR You can kick ass with three mates in multiplayer modes.



WHACK PUNK With 45 opponents in total, you'll have sore knuckles by the time you meet D-Mob.



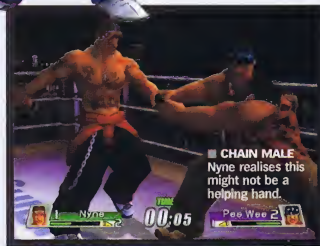
LAYDEEZE, HOS 'N' BITCHES

As Vendetta Producer Josh Holmes explains, the role of your character's girlfriend in the game is more than just an inconsequential detail. "In one of the first story scenes you get approached by a girl and the two of you hook up. Later, as you're gaining notoriety, girls will

PHat stats

What can you expect from Def Jam Vendetta.

- Ten underground hip-hop venues including DMX's Junkyard and Scarface's Speakeasy
- 1,500 fighter moves including signature moves and taunts
- Def Jam Records artists Redman, Method Man, Nore, Capone, DMX, Ludacris, Scarface, Ghostface Killah, Keith Murray and WC (that's pronounced 'dub-see') appear as boss characters. Beat them and you unlock them in multiplayer modes.
- Story mode
- Exhibition mode
- Survival mode
- Four match types: one-on-one Single Match, four-player Big Team Match, Free For All and Handicap.



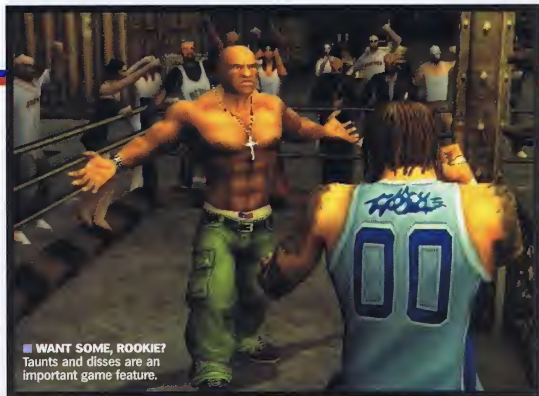
CHAIN MALE Nyle realizes this might not be a helping hand.

approach you after a fight and will start flirting with you. Your current girlfriend then gets p'ssed off and there's a bit of a cat-fight between the two of them. You have the opportunity to fight as either girl in the ensuing scrap.

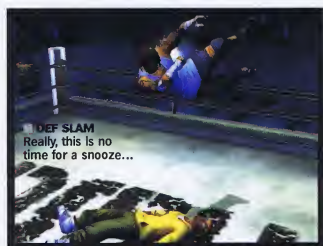
Based on whether you win or lose and who you chose, there's a number of different outcomes that can take place. If you picked your current girlfriend and win then she's really happy with you. If you pick the new girl and lose then she's really p'ssed.

Back the winning fighter and you unlock a photo gallery based on the real woman who inspired her on-screen character. As far as unlockable goodies are concerned it's hardly PC, but then again we're in a world where a 'ho' isn't usually found in a garden centre. At least not unless she needs to buy a houseplant.

In the main body of the game, the Def Jam opponents look and sound great. Each of the artists appearing in Vendetta recorded the dialogue for their on-screen counterparts, so it's not just the pumping soundtrack that's authentic. The rappers also made other suggestions, from clothing to finishing moves, as Daryl Anselmo, Lead Art Director explains: "DMX as Daryl Anselmo, Lead Art Director explained that he wanted his tattoos to come to life and jump out off of his back and into the ring, while Redman, he wanted a special move where he sits on his opponent and breaks out of a TV while the girls come into the ring." Sadly, for now, these suggestions remain on the technical wishlist.



■ **WANT SOME, ROOKIE?**
Taunts and disses are an important game feature.



■ **DEF SLAM**
Really, this is no time for a snooze...



■ **CLOWNING AROUND**
Chuckiez here is just one of Vendetta's original creations. Are you going to tell him he looks funny?

GIRLZ N THE HOOD
IT'S HARDLY PC, BUT THEN WE ARE IN A WORLD WHERE A 'HO' ISN'T USUALLY FOUND IN A GARDEN CENTRE



But Method Man's request to finish his opponents off by cracking their spines over his head... That's in.

All of which brings us to the knotty question of

respect. Namely, how do the rappers feel about the fact that for the player to progress through the game they've got to have their asses kicked? Mike Ferrara says, "To them it wasn't

really a major issue. We were more concerned that they were. We thought a lot of them would want to appear at the end and be the hardest boss to beat, but they all actually wanted to be up the front so that the kids would see them right away. It worked out pretty well."

With Def Jam Vendetta slated for a March release, and looking like a breath of funkified fresh air in the increasingly stale wrestling genre, the only question that remains is where to go next for the franchise? Stan Chow smiles, "Initially the rappers wanted a really open world, a GTAIII-style game. They had some really huge ideas and in the future, who knows? We may go there." Tommy Vercetti? You have been warned. □

the rap pack

So just who are the fearsome MCs prepared to swap rapping for grappling in EA Sports BIG's latest venture? As you'll see, many of them are no stranger to a scuffle.



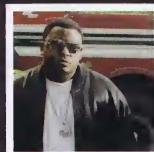
NORE
Formerly known as Noreaga after his dubious choice of hero, NORE's career began when he was doing time for [guilt] attempted murder along with Capone. Frightened the charts with irresistible Neptunes-powered hit, *Nothin'*.
Recommended listening: God's Favorite (Def Jam, 2002) www.defjam.com/nore



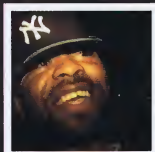
WC
No sniggering at the back. The only West Coast rapper on Def Jam takes his name from his former group Westside Connection which featured Ice Cube and Mack 10. And it's pronounced Dub-Cee, anyway, fools.
Recommended listening: Ghetto Heisman (Def Jam, 2002) www.defjam.com/wc



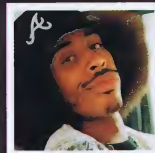
GHOSTFACE KILLAH
This intense lyricist is a key member of massively influential rap dynasty the Wu-Tang Clan, and has been their most consistent solo performer. Recently seen sporting a gold falcony glove.
Recommended listening: Supreme Clientele (Epic, 2000) www.ghostfacekillah.com



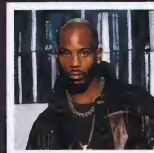
SCARFACE
Once a member of legendary foul-mouthed Houston rap crew Geto Boys, Scarface is now President of Def Jam South. Recent album *The Fix* proves that boardroom life hasn't softened him.
Recommended listening: Diary (Rap-A-Lot, 1994) www.defjam.com/defjam/south/scarface



METHOD MAN
AKA Methical, Johnny Blaze, MZA and Iron Lung, he's a Wu-Tang founder, and the first dancster to achieve solo success. Method Man is now arguably more well-known for his rap (and film) collaborations with Redman.
Recommended listening: Tical (Def Jam, 1994) www.defjam.com/methodman



LUDACRIS
The best thing to come out of Atlanta since Outkast, and the first signing to Def Jam South. Simply one of the most exciting rappers out there today, he claims his lyrics are inspired by chicken and beer.
Recommended listening: Word Of Mouf (Def Jam, 2001) www.defjam.com/ludacris



DMX
Dark Man X annihilated the rap scene on his emergence back in 1998 and he's since sold more than 15 million albums. The menacingly gruff rapper also heads up the Ruff Ryders posse.
Recommended listening: The Great Depression (Def Jam, 2001) www.defjam.com/dmx



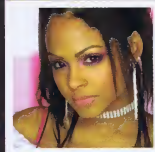
REDMAN
The Joker in the Def Jam pack. Following the success of the *How High* movie with Method Man (where the perma-stoned duo puff their way into Harvard), the pair are currently remaking [yes] *Weird Science*.
Recommended listening: Malpractice (Def Jam, 2001) www.defjam.com/redman



KEITH MURRAY
Underrated peer of Redman and Erick Sermon, possibly because his name makes him sound more like a carpet salesman than the adept verbal jester he really is.
Recommended listening: Eligma (Uke, 1994) www.defjam.com/gen/classic/index.html



CAPONE
NORE's partner in crime in the notoriously thugged-out CNN where Capone was the mellow of the two rappers (although that's strictly relative). A solo album is due soon, as is a CNN reunion.
Recommended listening: The War Report (Penalty, 1997) www.defjam.com/gen/classic/index.html



CHRISTINA MILIAN
Ah! To PM might've suggested that Christina is Def Jam's answer to Britney, but this petite prodigy is also the songwriter behind hits such as J-Lo's *Play*. Inevitably she plays the game's love interest.
Recommended listening: Christina Milian (Def Jam, 2002) www.defsoul.com/christinamilian



Feel nothing.



Feel everything.

Experience every bump and bend as you take to the track with a Logitech® Driving Force steering wheel. It features realistic force-feedback, foot pedals and even a moulded lap attachment so you can play from your favourite driving seat. And it's compatible with the latest PlayStation®2 games such as



Gran Turismo™ 3: A-spec and World Rally Championship,™ with more great new titles coming soon. Make sure you don't let anything get between you and the ultimate driving experience.



Review Charter

FACT: OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE's reviews are the best in the business. Our crack squad of reviewers play the games longer, harder and better than anyone else. And we absolutely love what we do.

It's this dedication that means you can trust our scores above anyone else's. Whether a game's superb or sewage, our experts will tell it like it is with buckets of opinion rather than a few cheap gags and some PR nonsense. Our experienced reviewers have written for the game industry's most revered publications, both here and abroad. What's more, our writers have plenty of 'heritage' in the industry, having a collective history spanning into decades. Rest assured that these are opinions you can trust.

Next time you head off to spend your hard-earned cash on a PlayStation 2 game, make sure you read our reviews first.

REVIEW RATINGS

HERE'S WHAT OUR REVIEW SCORES STAND FOR:

- 10/10 Nigh on revolutionary. A game that could change the face of gaming forever
- 09/10 A truly astonishing game. If you have a PlayStation 2, you need this now
- 08/10 Highly recommended
- 07/10 Good, solid fare that's definitely well worth a look
- 06/10 Better than average, and ideal for hardcore fans of the genre
- 05/10 An average game
- 04/10 Poor, but still with the odd moment
- 03/10 Extremely disappointing
- 02/10 To be avoided
- 01/10 Beer mat

THE OPS2 AWARDS

We don't hand out high scores for nothing so when you see one of these, you'll know it's a sign of quality. Look for them on game boxes.

GOLD
PlayStation 2

The Gold Award is a rare gem and only to be given to PS2 games that score that magic 10/10. The only game to get Gold is MGSS. Too right!

SILVER
PlayStation 2

The Silver Award is for games that receive 9/10. If you see this, it's a sign of star quality. Indicating that you should buy this game now!

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

The Bronze Award is for games that score 8/10. These games are highly recommended and are 100% guaranteed to satisfy.

media
DVD / MUSIC / MEDIA

DVD RELEASES

080

Austin Powers in Goldmember / The Royal Tenenbaums / Murder by Numbers / The Office - Season 1



DEVIL MAY CRY 2.....054

Dante's back in town to kick some demon ass!

THE SIMS.....060

Lead a double-life in your PS2! The ultimate version of the Sims has arrived!

THE MARK OF KRI.....064

Dante's not the only one slaying in style this month.

SPACE CHANNEL 5 part 2.....067

Dance up a storm with sexy aliens and Micheal Jackson!

STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS.....068

ACTIVISION ANTHOLOGY.....070

CONTRA: SHATTERED SOLDIER.....071

SWORD OF THE SAMURAI.....072

- 073 PRIDE FC
- 074 PAC-MAN WORLD 2
- 075 BIG MUTHA TRUCKERS
- 076 LEGENDS OF WRESTLING 2
- 076 MONOPOLY PARTY
- 077 ALPINE RACER 3
- 077 ATV2: QUAD RACING
- 078 BMX XXX

PSone™
078 JINX



It takes a little more to make a

With a few distinct changes to the formula, is Dante still the devil you know?

PUBLISHER: THQ
DEVELOPER: CAPCOM
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1
OUT: MARCH
WEBSITE: WWW.CAPCOM.COM
GBZ MODE: YES
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO

■ BACK STORY

Devil May Cry actually came about as a result of Capcom trying out new things when it was looking at Resident Evil 4. DMC won its own following thanks to its differences from RE, and now this series is already starting to change.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL SELECTION AWARDS

DEVIL MAY CRY 2

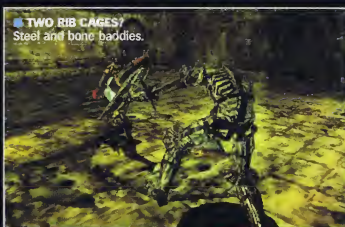




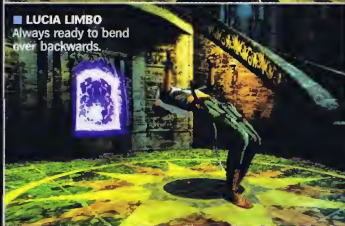
■ **TRIGGER FINGER** Dante lets rip in his demon form.



■ **LET'S DANCE!** Lots of twin-blade vs twin-blade action to be had.



■ **TWO BFB CAGES?** Steel and bone buddies.



■ **LUCIA LIMBO** Always ready to bend over backwards.



■ **SWINGIN'** Tight groups can go down in one swing.



When *Devil May Cry* first hit the PS2 scene it did a lot more than simply provide gamers with a new kind of action game. Capcom had been enjoying great financial success through its *Resident Evil* series, but was winning little in the way of critical acclaim for the lack of change from one title to another. Room for improvement lay in the control system, and *Devil May Cry* proved that Capcom was more than capable of producing a smooth, fast-paced action title with intuitive controls. Knowing this, it became apparent that Capcom had kept *Resident Evil* the way it was for a reason. Whether that was because Capcom felt the player needed the controls to limit the player enough so as to provide challenge, or it simply felt changing things would annoy the fans. With that insight into Capcom's design process in mind I put down the inevitable sequel, *Devil May Cry 2*, uncertain if the Japanese developer has accomplished what it set out to achieve or not.

Devil May Cry 2 continues the adventures of Dante, son of the demon-knight Sparda, who is taking over his father's old role of protector of mankind from the forces of hell. This time around Dante and a nimble redhead named Lucia work together to foil the plans of Arial, a psychopath seeking to open a door to hell. Because Dante and Lucia have different motives and objectives, they embark on different paths, creating not only two storylines with different events, but also the perfect premise to stick each character on their own disc, ala *Resident Evil*.

The basic premise is unchanged, with the player leading a powerful warrior through a series of gothic-inspired levels, hacking their way through hordes of monsters, collecting power-ups, slowly enhancing their character and even solving the occasional simplistic puzzle. There are, however, some changes here that will make a real difference to fans of the original, depending on what got them hooked.

AT A GLANCE

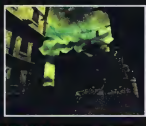
Normally the first improvement to become apparent in game sequels these days is the graphics, although with the original game being such a feast for the eyes, perhaps it's not so surprising to hear it almost takes a side by side comparison to see the differences. That said, there is a difference, and Capcom should take a bow for sharpening the character models and textures one step closer to perfection. The extra detail in the faces is the most noteworthy step up, as it makes a real difference in the cut-scenes. Dante's white head of hair looks much more like a flowing set of locks, and less like a frozen moment. A fairly important consideration for a natural look with a character who stoically stands dead still so often.

For those not familiar with *Devil May Cry*, note that all those screenshots you've been gawking at are of a game that dynamically switches viewpoints, either by following the character along and 'moving the camera' or by snapping to a fresh angle which offers a better view of what's going on. Aside from a few problem spots, this works extremely well, freeing the player of the need to adjust the viewpoint and allowing them to concentrate on their actions. *Devil May Cry 2* is no different in this regard, usually giving the player a clear view of their superbly animated warrior at a constant sixty frames per second. Every move that both our heroes and the monsters pull off conveys a real sense of impact and consistent physics. Without any worries about dodgy collision detection, the top-notch visuals serve to give the player an excellent grasp of what's going on.

The detailed gothic architecture and outlook of the first game has survived, but there are now far more contemporary locations, such as inner city skyscrapers with external lifts and industrial zones. There are also new underwater environments for Lucia's missions, although because they're in underground dungeon complexes they don't look quite so stunning as the spires and arches of the areas with an expansive urban-gothic skyline.

WIDE OPEN SPACES

With more outdoor settings, Dante may now have more room to move, but he and Lucia will have to deal with a dramatically increased number of avian annoyances. It does make taking to the air in *Devil Trigger* mode more commonly useful though, so it's not all bad.



It takes a little more to make a



PLEASE BE BOSSIER!

They may look the part, but underneath their fearsome visage lies a total pussycat... Or in this case, a target dummy. Too easy to kill, either through poor AI, or simply not having useful enough attacks, most of the bosses are a disappointing pushover.



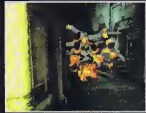
NEFASTURRIS

For somewhat obvious reasons, his name means 'tower of disaster'.



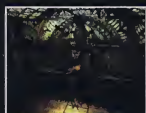
TARTARUSSIAN

This guy's got balls so big they deserve a healthy amount of respect. Erm...



PHANTOM

The hot-blooded spider demon from the first game is back, but only in body.



ORANGGEURRA

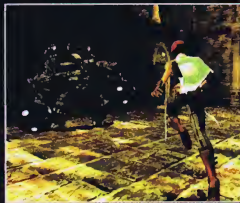
Provided you don't dice this giant ape-demon too fast, he'll do some cool tricks.



■ **RHINOPLASTINE** Lucia's going to want a nose job shortly.



■ **CHICKY BIRD** No question of this demon's gender.



■ **CHARGE!** Just be ready to dodge...



■ **POWERFUL PRICK** We mean the attack.



■ **BONE CUTTING** They won't bleed, but they can break.



■ **HOOFIN' IT** That boot to the chin fell a tad short.

→ The sound effects and music are very much from the same textbook though, with the tunes bordering between industrial and nu-metal most of the time, and softer strings for those moments when Dante or Lucia are walking down deserted streets. No prizes for the voice acting, nor the wooden dialogue (not that this is a story driven game folks), but the booming firearms, clash of steel and roar of the demonic beasts throughout *Devil May Cry 2* help it earn our audio-visual seal of approval.

We'll go back to how good the moves look, because that's obviously been a factor in what new actions Capcom has chosen to give us. Dante looks like an in-control operator in a John Woo film with two guns blazing, and Lucia hurls throwing knives at a steady pace as she twirls about. When facing foes in different directions, why wouldn't you fire/throw at more than one target at once? Exactly... you would. So Capcom have included the ability to attack an extra incoming enemy on top of the one you have targeted, by pressing the analogue stick towards them. It doesn't let you constantly work on two monsters at once, but it does get you out of jams when enemies start to close in, and makes for golden 'show-off' material with your friends.

DRIVING YOU UP THE WALL

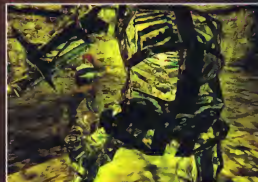
The other major addition is the ability to dodge and run up walls with the **○** button. This simplifies the dodge from *DMC*, which used to require the player to hold 'lock-on', jump, and a direction. Now it's as simple as

pressing in the direction you wish to evade and hitting **○**. It's possible that making dodging this easy has made some of the fights easier than they should be, especially when facing a boss that relies upon a single, powerful attack. Although, in this day and age, AI should create the difficulty rather than movement capabilities.

Running up walls is an excellent addition, as it gives the player something stylish to do that also creates some interesting attacking options, as the character tends to finish their run popping up over enemies that were toe-to-toe. Sure enough, there's a new 'death from above' move that allows for concentrated downward firing, which kicks in automatically if the player fires from directly above an enemy.

Lucia is a martial arts expert, and unlike Dante, whose attacks are more effective than intricate, her fighting style lends towards a faster, more diverse set of melee attacks. When launching into the air, she can flatten out her trajectory and land a mean flying kick, which, when followed up with further mid-air kicks, does massive damage to foes. Because she can use this effectively either close or far from the ground, and even tack a special upside-down spinning kick on to clear a safe landing spot, Lucia is clearly the more versatile warrior up close.

Because there's very little difference in the effectiveness of Dante and Lucia's ranged weapons, it leaves the slinky redhead as the more powerful character. Dante is still made out to be 'the man', but Lucia dishes it out a little better.

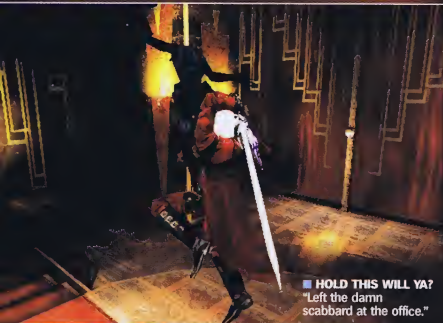




■ **DEXTROUS DANTE**
So cool and calm, he doesn't even look.



■ **TRIGGER A CHANGE** Dante practically bursts out of his skin with a touch of **ED**



■ **HOLD THIS WILL YA?**
"Left the damn scabbard at the office."



GREAT DIRECTOR, LOUSY EDITOR

Devil May Cry 2's cut-scenes are a feast for the eyes, with some superb action and CG tid-bits. It's just a shame the dialogue and flow of the story is so typical of an action game like this.



Of course, both characters have the same 'Devil Trigger' ability to turn into a demonic being that can take and dish out far more damage and incorporate some miscellaneous powers like flight, healing or super-fast running. It's still the thing you save up for special occasions when you need to pull it back together or finish off a boss.

So with a new character, new moves and two separate storylines over two discs of gaming to play through, remembering *Devil May Cry* was a rather short lived game, surely we now have more than enough to sink our teeth into? Well, unfortunately, despite being fleshed out a tad more, *Devil May Cry 2* is still quite a short game to play through. Anyone who is vaguely familiar with how DMC played will grasp this game very quickly, and finish Dante's eighteen missions after a few hours. Lucia's thirteen missions took us less than three hours to go through, making the improvement in longevity of the main game quite minimal. Some of the stages are duplicated too, while others see each character tackle them a different way, essentially leaving you with less missions.

There's now even less emphasis on puzzles and exploration, with combat making up almost all of the gameplay now. That might suit some just fine, although the first game's puzzles helped break up the endless combat, keeping it fresh. There's still the odd tricky jump or timed activity to do, but it is now more beat 'em up than action-adventure.

Performing juggling combos now requires the player to time attacks very carefully after the first hit. It's one of the few ways the combat system has edged towards being a bit more hardcore. The juggles can still be done, but it's no longer so easy that the player's opponents often spend the whole fight in the air before dying.

Most of the issues presented above as potential shortcomings are things that don't necessarily matter to everyone. They stem from my (and no doubt other DMC fans') desire to see the game made deeper and more involved, but there's one gripe that must be made, that matters to anyone after an intense gaming experience. The bosses are far too weak.



■ **POWER PLAY** There's no punches pulled in Devil Trigger mode.

Even though the new DMC2 development team has created some truly breathtaking behemoths and otherworldly nasties for Dante and Lucia to square off against, its failed to make them as tough or dangerous as they look. Without a basic difficulty setting to adjust, the bosses are disappointingly easy to beat as the player finishes the Normal game. The common problem with most of these foes is how poorly they use their abilities. For example, Tartarusian, a boss with two huge wrecking balls on chains instead of hands boasts the ability to hurl a ball at the player for king hit. With the chain limiting how far he can project the ball, unless the player closes on him, they can simply shoot him to bits before he gets in range. Even if the player does wind up closer to the boss, basic dodging is more than enough to get out of trouble.

The only real challenge the bosses pose to hardcore gamers is in getting high ratings for their stages, a shame when most sane gamers want their boss encounters to be tough enough to feel they've just overcome something that will defeat them unless they play really well. It's much like seeing a bad martial arts film where the hero is so much better than their opponents, that most of their battles aren't exciting. That's not to say DMC2 is so simple that the player can just take it easy, but seasoned gamers will dance circles around most of the monsters.

Before hardcore fans of *Devil May Cry* start sobbing at the prospect of a lack of satisfying foes, it should be noted that the diligent efforts of a gamer willing to play through multiple times can unlock higher difficulty modes. Urban fashion freaks will get a kick out of the first feature to be unlocked, which comes in the form of optional Diesel outfits. This is shameless cross promotion that's somewhat out of place in a game where nobody is dressed normally, but it comes with a Mission mode to let the player choose their starting stage as they please, so they can practice specific bits.

It takes a little more to make a



■ **SPARKY** It's easy to know if your blows land or not.



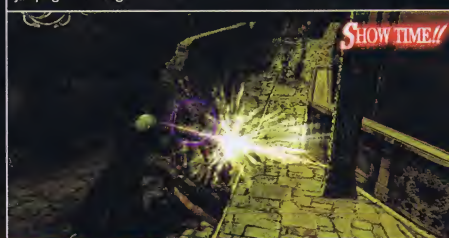
■ **BOSSY BASTARD** The nutbag behind all this doomsday stuff.



■ **ABOUT TO DIE?**
When these things circle overhead it's a worry.



■ **BASE JUMPING JOY**
Dante has a thing for jumping off buildings.



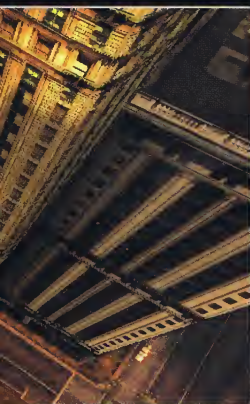
→ All up it's an exercise in tedium to get to the difficulty level the fans want rather than simply having it available from the outset – but at least it's there.

Collecting weapon upgrades and power-ups is a bit different, with a somewhat simpler system. Simplicity doesn't mean a lack of variety though, and while the visible effects of using varying combinations is hard to spot, the player now levels up non-magical weapons and selects which amulet, element and Devil Trigger heart they wish to use. They all have varying effects, and using the right one at the right time is sometimes necessary to make it to a certain place, or even through an area at all. Less RPG-stat building stuff, and more 'pick and choose' gameplay is always welcome.

Summarising how *Devil May Cry 2* has turned out requires several varying points of view, because what you were hoping for out of the game is what will make or break Dante's quite different return. If you're a DMC fan wanting things to get deeper, with a lot more combat moves to learn, bosses that'll make you call for Mum and a true challenge from the outset, then the lack of an initial difficulty setting will let you see too much of the game too soon. Capcom has streamlined things, possibly because a lot of casual gamers found the original game a tad too daunting, but it brings with it an outward lack

of depth as a nasty side effect for the serious gamers. Quite frankly though, aside from the delay in having to get to the real challenge, *Devil May Cry 2* has all the same elements that were there in the first game, with a new character to play around with and, more importantly, some new moves that are the coolest looking of the bunch. Keep in mind that this has been geared up as a high-production value beat 'em up that takes time to get a challenge out of, compared to its more action-adventure styled predecessor, and Dante and Lucia will do it for you nicely. ■ Dan Toose





THE NEW GIRL

Under the direction of her mother, Lucia is working to rescue the Arcana, magic artefacts that the malevolent Arius requires to create your stereotypical Armageddon scenario. Like Dante, she's not 'entirely human', and has a Devil Trigger state of her own to give the demons a taste of their own guff. She varies from Dante in several ways though.



TWIN BLADES

Along with her array of kicks, Lucia wields short blades, slicing enemies to bits as she pirouettes through their ranks. They don't hit as hard as Dante's huge sword, but they strike more often. Her melee prowess makes upgrading these very worthwhile.



FLYING KICK

Not spectacular on its own, but keep hitting Ⓐ after this connects and you'll kick them into a pulp, while slowing your descent to the ground. This kick projects Lucia forwards quickly, making it her fastest (and most over the top) method of transport.



DEVIL TRIGGER

Looking a little less grim in her white devil form, Lucia appears to have feathers, making her seem somewhat angelic. She lets loose with volleys of quilled throwing knives at a distance, and even more powerful melee strikes than normal.



■ NEO? "Sorry Dante, thought you were someone else."



DEVIL MAY CRY 2

Why we'd buy it:

- It's one of the most spectacular games to look at on the PS2
- New character plays nicely
- Given time, there's as much as DMC

Why we'd leave it:

- Takes ages for good players to unlock a mode they'll find challenging
- Doesn't deepen any aspect of the first game at all

Graphics

Fast, beautiful and mesmerising. Few can match it. **95**

Sound

Besides some lame voice acting it sounds super. **96**

Gameplay

Arguably too streamlined, but has cool new bits. **97**

Life span

Sadly, only the diligent will get to the good stuff. **95**

Die-hards may cry at the new direction, but there's still enough gorgeous flash, fracas and firearms in DMC2 to satisfy.

08

OFFICIAL VERDICT



■ **GET THE LOOK** If only everyone could custom make their head.



■ TYPICAL FEMALE

There's a perfectly good pinnle machine, and all she can think about is shoes.



THE SIMS

Megalomaniacs and voyeurs rejoice!
The ultimate Tamagotchi has arrived on PS2.

PUBLISHER:
ELECTRONIC ARTS
DEVELOPER: MAXIS
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-2
OUT: NOW
WEB SITE: WWW.THESIMS-CONSOLE.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO
PERIPHERALS: NO

■ BACK STORY

The Sims is the highest selling PC game of all time. There has been a record number of five expansion packs released for it and a refurbished 'deluxe' edition of the original too. Sims Online, a version of the game playable across a network has just been released in the US to a mixed reception.



Ah, the plights of regular human beings. As a society we can't get enough of them. Reality television programs draw record ratings because people tune in to watch other people do nothing more than sit on the couch and argue with one another. There are no car chases, no epic war scenes, no deadly games of cat and mouse with only their wits to depend on for survival. Just blue collar beauticians and bricklayers recounting their sexual exploits and fiercely squabbling over who ate the last Tim Tam. Oh, and there's the chance we might see some nudity too.

With these thoughts in mind it is no wonder that The Sims, a simulation of the most mundane facets of real life, is the most popular PC game ever. Unlike reality TV, the game requires you to actually use your brain and make strategic decisions that impact on the well being of your Sims. It falls upon your shoulders to ensure that they are successful in their relationships and career, all the while satisfying their basic day-to-day needs.

Your Sims' needs, or 'motives' as they are called in the game, fall under eight different categories: Hunger: Hygiene: Energy: Social: Comfort: Bladder: Fun and Room. Each motive is represented by a green 'energy' bar which

gradually decreases and turns red over time. The bulk of time spent playing the game is devoted to meeting the requirements of each motive. So if your Social motive is low, you invite a friend over for a chat. If your Sim is lacking in Fun, you make them watch cartoons on TV. Satisfying each motive can also impact adversely on others, so making your Sim have dinner may raise their Hunger bar but deplete their Bladder bar. Then if your Sim goes to the toilet without washing their hands, their Hygiene motive takes a hit. Maintaining a balance between each of the motives is the key to your Sim achieving an overall good mood.

But it isn't all about satisfying their basic urges. You'll also need to make friends and learn skills to progress along your chosen career path and move into bigger and better houses. Interior decorating fans will forget they ever heard the name ' Ikea' once they lay eyes on the 150+ number of items you can fill your house with. Items available range from simple kitchen counter tops to plasma screen televisions. Different items affect the aesthetic 'Room' motive of your Sims and can be used for distinctive purposes; an electric guitar will increase your Sims' creativity while a chess set will make them think more logically.



ROLL CALL
SIMSTARS: THE RIVALS
The Create-A-Sim option is quite thorough, if not as comprehensive as we hoped. Check out our fantasy threesome...



SHAKIRA

The booty-shakin' Colombian saucelot looks great with plenty of slap and some hoop earrings. We've gone for a gypsy skirt and crop top that says 'fiery, but sensitive.'



SOPHIE ELLIS BEXTOR

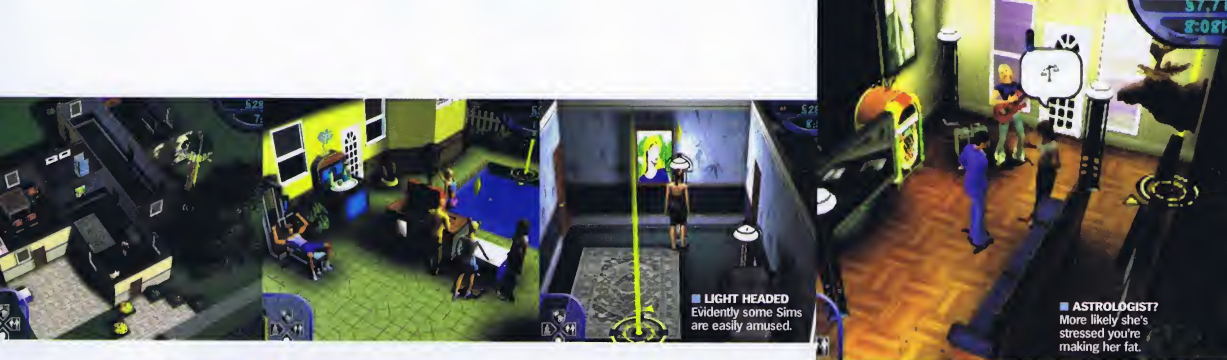
Creating her rhombus-shaped head was tough, but stylish make-up combined with an elegant basque completes the effect. Check out the pearl necklace, too. See? She's classy.



HOLLY VALANCE

Our pop export's decision to dye her hair a weird shade of mahogany threw us a bit. But we went with it, [rather than the old dirty blonde] and added a cute plaid miniskirt and blue bra top.





STATUS SYMBOLS

Hey, it's not about who you are, it's what you own. Display your new-found wealth conspicuously with these luxury items. Some also have additional self-improving qualities.



LIBRI DI RECINA BOOKCASE Boost your cooking or mechanical skills with a good book. Remember books, kids? Paper things with words?



PERSPIRATION EXECUTIVE TREADMILL Check out those buns. Working out is the only way to get into shape and boost your body points - crucial for the more physical career paths.



CHARIS MASTER VANITY TABLE You're so vain, you probably think this paragraph is about you. This PS2-exclusive item allows you to change a Sim's appearance mid-game. Practising speeches in front of normal mirrors also helps your charisma.



CHUCK MATEWELL CHESS SET Playing chess is fun, sociable (really) and improves your Sim's logic ability. We suggest using the Luzhin defence.



LIGHT HEADED
Evidently some Sims are easily amused.

ASTROLOGIST?
More likely she's stressed you're making her fat.

REALITY GAMING
Note the bad posture of the PC gamer. Spot on.

THE DIFFERENT LIVES TO LIVE

The PS2 version of *The Sims* features two main modes of play, the 'Play the Sims' classic neighbourhood mode from the PC game and the all new level-based 'Get a Life' story mode exclusive to the PS2. The first mode allows you to create a family of one or more Sims and place them within a neighbourhood, by either building a new house or evicting the residents of one of the pre-existing houses. You can then add more families to the neighbourhood for your Sims to interact with, and effectively control a whole community of Sims. The size of the PS2 neighbourhood is slightly smaller than that of the PC version (minus expansions), and it's also worth noting that you are unable to build multi-storey houses in the PS2 version which is a shame. The fact that you can keep evicting and moving new families into your neighbourhood means this mode is endless and could conceivably be played forever.

The 'Get a Life' mode is a worthy addition to the game. Unlike the neighbourhood mode it has a beginning and an end, and is somewhat akin to the career mode in a *Tony Hawk* skateboarding game. Each house you live in is classed as a 'level', and within each level you are given a series of objectives that you need to meet in order to progress to the next level. These objectives can be as simple as fixing a broken TV or as difficult as throwing a successful party for your neighbours. Successful completion of certain objectives unlocks new items and Create-a-Sim options as well as two-player games selectable from the main menu.

'Get a Life' has obviously been designed to make *The Sims* appeal to console gamers and it does the job brilliantly - with a very gradual increase in difficulty as you pass each level and genuinely enjoyable objective-based gameplay. However, as the objectives are always the same each time you play through it, it is unlikely that you'll bother with this mode more than once, if only to unlock

any items you may have missed. Besides, it's more fun creating families of your own in the neighbourhood mode and developing your own scenarios.

BRINGING THE SIMS TO PS2

You've got to give credit to Maxis for the console incarnation of their PC classic. Rather than simply dumping a lazy port of the PC version on unsuspecting PS2 owners, the developers have gone back to basics and built a new game from the ground up. They've even included some of the better aspects of two of the expansion packs; *Live in Large* and *House Party*, along with all-new content exclusive to the PS2. The sprite-based graphics of the original have been scrapped in favour of a polygon-filled 3D world. Instead of the fixed isometric view of the PC version where you could only choose from four 'cemented' camera angles, you can now pan and zoom the camera to view the action from whichever perspective you like, as long as it's above ground.

The slight downside to going 3D is that the texture detail on the items in your house is significantly lower, which gives the game a much more cartoonish appearance. Another gripe with the visuals is that the pictures in the Sims' thought bubbles, which are hints to what your Sim wants, are way too small. They might be easily distinguished when you're sitting in front of a computer monitor but it's a bit different when you're the length of a PS2 controller cord away. Understanding what your Sim wants is vital to the gameplay, and it's just as well that you can check the motives manually rather than relying on what appears in their thought bubbles.

There was a lot of speculation about whether or not the mouse driven controls of the PC original would translate well to the PS2 controller. The good news is that not only does the controller work as well as a mouse, in many ways it works even better. The left analogue stick is used to move the cursor while the right stick controls the

TWO'S COMPANY

New to this PS2 version are several two-player Bonus modes. Again they're unlocked by playing *Get a Life*, and you have to compete to become more rich and popular than your friends. Just like in the real world.



THE MUSEUM

Here you have ten minutes to bag more money out of the visitors than the other player. Again, playing against the clock just feels wrong.



THE FRAT HOUSE

First one to make three new friends at the party gets to jump in the hot tub. You can scupper your mate's chances by spreading vile rumours.

CREATION MADE SIM-PLE

Before you jump into the neighbourhood you're going to have to create a Sim. Take care with their personality as it will directly impact on your game, for example if you make your Sim too mean it'll be hard for them to befriend other Sims.



1. Give your Sim a name, Star sign and define their personality traits.
2. Choose the physical appearance and clothes of your Sim.
3. Now buy your Sim a vanity mirror and you can change their appearance in-game to suit the current trends. You can give your Sims everything from skull caps to blonde afros.



SPA-ING PARTNERS Bubbly warm water is a definite chick magnet.



camera. Each of the functions available to the player has been mapped to all of the buttons on the controller, which results in an unbelievably intuitive control system. It also makes the game run a lot smoother, as you can switch control between Sims with a single button press, rather than having to select them with a mouse from an on-screen GUI. Dragging a cursor around with a joystick may be a little sluggish compared to a mouse, but in no way does it detract from the gaming experience.

If you're particularly satisfied with a Sim you've nurtured or a house you've designed, you can take your memory card to a friends place and import them into their neighbourhood. So it's possible that your Sim and your mate's Sim could get married. Does that make you in-laws?

NOT JUST FOR GIRLS

At first OPS2 were resigned to labelling *The Sims* a 'casual gamers' game, and not really worth our time considering all the other games we want to play. A few hours later we were desperately trying to earn enough money to buy our Sims a new train set. The truth is that *The Sims* is an amazingly addictive game that can captivate a more diverse spectrum of gamers than any other. In short; it has universal appeal. We don't know

why a game that simulates the humdrum of everyday human life is so likeable; we're games journalists not psychoanalysts. All we know is that if you're after a game that offers almost infinite replay value and a gaming experience you won't find anywhere else then *The Sims* is for you. Then again, in the words of comedian Jerry Seinfeld; 'if I want something long, boring and with no point to it, I have MY LIFE'. □ Tristan Ogilvie

THE SIMS

Why we'd buy it:

- We want to get our grifts into gaming.
- Virtually limitless replay value.
- The 'Get a life' and two-player modes are cool additions.

Why we'd leave it:

- We prefer our games to be a form of escapism.
- Can't be customised as much as the PC version.

Graphics	Occasional slowdown but effectively colourful	03
Sound	Monotonous music and sporadic sound effects	07
Gameplay	Great controls and impossible to put down	05
Life span	Open-ended play means an almost limitless lifespan	05

A one-of-a-kind gaming experience that even your Mum will enjoy, with extras to make your PC gamer friends jealous.

09

OFFICIAL VERDICT





Eat up the road. From the dusty dirt roads of Western Australia to the icy S-bends of Sweden, now you can get into rally mode without getting off the sofa. WRC II Extreme is the only official game of the FIA World Rally Championship, pitting you against the world's best rally drivers in over 100 gruelling WRC stages. And with more spins, scrapes and smashes, it's faster, dirtier and louder than ever. So hit the road - face first.



THE COURAGE PLACE THE EXTREME PLACE THE COMPETITIVE PLACE

PlayStation 2
THE THIRD PLACE

evolution
DESIGN

"PS" and "PlayStation" are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "The Third Place" is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. World Rally Championship II Extreme © 2002 Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. All rights reserved. Published by Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. Developed by Evolution Studios. An official product of the FIA World Rally Championship licensed by International Sportsweek Communications Limited. WUT0004 KSP512N

www.wrc.com/playstation

REVIEW

THE MARK OF KRI



THE MARK OF KRI

San Diego Studio grabs you by the scruff of the neck and slams you head first into a cel-shaded slaughterhouse.

PUBLISHER: SCE
DEVELOPER: SAN DIEGO STUDIO
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1
OUT: MARCH
WEB SITE: WWW.SCEE.COM
GEN: PS2
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO

■ BACK STORY

The Mark of Kri was in development for over 2 years at SCE's San Diego Studio. It was originally intended as a PSone title, but the developers found that platform too restrictive to be able to achieve their vision. San Diego Studio's next PS2 title will be the sequel to AtV Offroad Fury.



Like with anything in life, the first impressions of a video game can be deceiving. At first glance, The Mark of Kri's cartoon-like appearance and fantasy based locations present an ideal opportunity to go running around collecting magical coconuts and jumping on the heads of slow-witted woodland creatures. However, this peaceful outlook is quickly forgotten once you witness the main character Rau mercilessly decapitate a hapless enemy and repeatedly stab their suddenly shorter, still-twitching body just to make sure.

The developers San Diego Studio have taken a gamble by juxtaposing colourfully rendered environments and characters (the animators were ex-Disney!) with brutally realistic blood and guts violence. The results are surprisingly good. Rather than basing the game on existing mythologies and folklore, the developers have gathered influences from Polynesian, New Zealand Maori and Japanese cultures and used them to create an entirely original story set in a world that is alien, yet oddly familiar.

The game takes place in the aftermath of a massive empire that collapsed, leaving isolated pockets of civilisation struggling to survive. A mysterious evil is set to unite the six pieces of the Mark of Kri which will consequently have disastrous results for the planet, and it falls upon the rather beefy shoulders of the barbarian Rau to prevent it. Ok, so the storyline is not particularly inspired, but this is a beat 'em up and they sure have come a long way from the 'rescue your insipid girlfriend from street thugs' days.

HITTING THE MARK

One of the major gripes that we gamers have with scrolling beat 'em ups is that they almost always involve 'focal attack' based combat, meaning that you have to physically point your character in the direction of an enemy in order to hit them. This is not the case with The Mark of Kri, as the developers have incorporated a unique targeting system that allows you to use the right analogue stick to choose the foes you wish to attack and assign individual buttons on the controller to each enemy. Couple this with a deep combo system and the ability to block attacks from any direction and you have a melee combat system that is a much more cerebral affair than a mere exercise in button-mashing.

At the beginning of the game you'll only have to contend with one or two enemies at a time, and so it quickly becomes a case of blocking their attacks, counter attacking and then repeating. However by the later stages you'll find yourself surrounded by up to nine axe-wielding maniacs at a time, and it's here where the targeting system really comes into its own. With a few nimble button presses you'll be able to slash at the throat of the enemy in front of you, do a reverse stab into the stomach of the bad guy behind you and then break the nose of the goon beside you, all in one smooth motion... and you will have meant it.

Due to the fact that you can combat multiple enemies at once, occasionally the camera doesn't know where to look. So while targeting multiple enemies





WIDE OPEN SPACES
The Mark of Kri offers huge environments for a beat 'em up.



CHOPPER KRI'D
Okay, so that was an awful pun.



PAIN IN THE NECK
Something stuck in your throat?



BACK PAINS? Not yet, but once we line this up...



HEAD ACES TOO? Looks like Rau's just painful to be around in general.



FATES WORSE THAN DEATH

And you thought the fatalities in Mortal Kombat were sinister, well ripping out someone's spine while they're still alive is nothing compared to stabbing them in the groin with the blunt end of a spear! Death would be a relief after that.



Here we see Rau stab an enemy to the wall with his sword.



Good old decapitation, you can't be any more thorough than that.



Here Rau kindly helps an enemy get something out of their eye with the wrong end of his sword.

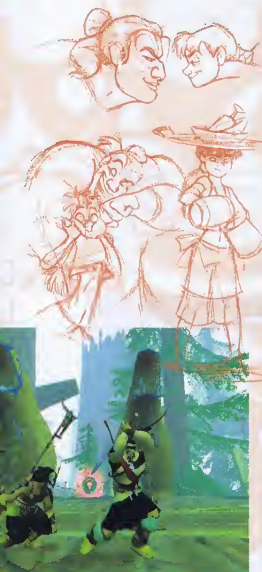
ensures much smoother and varied battles, you can't always see exactly what is happening. This is a fairly rare occurrence though, and the times that it does happen you can just hold down the block button until you regain a better view of the action.

A TIP-TOEING BARBARIAN

So it's just a case of ploughing through wave after wave of club-toting ogre types with bad teeth, right? Not exactly. Of course, you may choose to keep your sword drawn at all times and engage in bloody scraps with each enemy you come across, or alternatively you might like to sheath your weapons and creep up behind your rivals for a one hit stealth kill. At times, stealth is the only way to go as every so often there will be an enemy carrying a horn. Once a horn carrying enemy spots you they will blow the horn alerting all the other enemies in the area to your presence. So it's best you take them out nice and quietly unless you want to tackle a small army on your own.

The other option for stealth is the bow and arrow. Holding down **[X]** takes you into sniper mode so that you can take out enemies from afar. Rather than have a cross hair you get an indicator floating over the targets head; a blinking indicator means a body shot while a solid indicator means a fatal head shot. Unfortunately this system only works well if the enemy hasn't spotted you and you can take your time slowly lining up the head shot. Otherwise, if you're trying to shoot an arrow at an enemy that is shooting arrows at you you'll be wishing they'd just gone with manual aiming via a standard cross hair, as the degree of precision required is so high you'll have collected several arrows in your skull before you get a decent shot off.

While the stealth element does a good job of mixing up the gameplay and adding a more strategic feel to the experience, it has not been implemented as effectively as it could have been. Guards will walk past





DRAWING BOARD
With concept art like this, no wonder MOK's characters came to life.



GETTING A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

Accompanying Rau on his quest is his loyal hawk Kuzo, who you can take minimal control of and use to activate switches, cause diversions or just scout areas for ambushes.



When you are using the view point of the bird he'll automatically zoom in on enemies, switches or other places to fly to.



The blue beam of light indicates an area where Kuzo can land.



TRAILBLAZER Transparent sword swipes a-go-go.

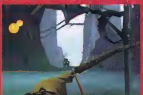


WEAPONS TO MAKE CONAN JEALOUS

There are four weapons on offer; the sword, the bow, the spear and the axe. Each weapon has differing attributes and must be earned by completing quests.



The sword can only target up to three enemies at once but is very light for quick attacking.



The bow is used primarily for stealth, don't bother trying to take out a group of charging enemies with it.



The spear can target up to six enemies at once, so it is an essential weapon for taking out the swarms of guards in the later levels.



The axe can target up to nine enemies at once, so it is an essential weapon for taking out the swarms of guards in the later levels.



→ the bodies of dead guards without batting an eyelid, so you don't really have to take the time to plan out the order in which you will kill a group of enemies in one area, as they'll only react if they see you, not if they see their dead mate that was alive a few seconds ago. So much effort has been put into the excellent melee battle system that you are left with hardly any stealth moves; no crouch, roll or hand-over-hand climbing along the edges of platforms. In fact the only stealth move you do get is the ability to shimmy along with your back against a wall, which isn't terribly useful and soon becomes annoying when Rau continually 'sticks' to the walls when you walk near them.

JUST MISSING THE MARK OF EXCELLENCE

The presentation throughout *The Mark of Kri* is superb, with excellent voice acting from the narrator and striking artwork throughout. A few of the cut-scenes are a tad grainy, but the way the sketches in between levels blends seamlessly into the action is brilliant, and really gives you the feeling that you are playing a graphic novel brought to life. Rau is fluidly animated too, from the way his weapons rattle around in their sheaths to the way he lumbers oaf-like up a ladder.

The musical score has a suitably tribal feel to it that really sets the mood, and the sound effects are top notch, such as the menacing scrape of an enemy's axe on the ground as they circle in on you or the meaty crunch as you relieve an attacker of their helmet with a slash of your sword.

The game itself feels quite short, but perhaps that is just because it leaves you wanting more. In any case, it is no shorter than your average beat 'em up. There are plenty of secrets to unlock by completing a list of challenges in each level, including mini-games such as

the gladiatorial arena survival games so there is substantial replay value. The only thing that might deter fans of the genre is the lack of any real boss battles. While the enemies do get bigger, stronger and greater in numbers as the game goes on, it almost feels like a prerequisite for beat 'em ups to have a designated burly badass at the end of each level that you need to overcome in order to pass to the next. This is not evident in *The Mark of Kri*, although the fact that you have to take on up to nine enemies at a time almost compensates for one big boss fight.

The Mark of Kri is not a groundbreaking game, but it is a very good one. The wonderfully intuitive combat system, compelling (albeit rehearsed) storyline and immaculate visual and aural presentation throughout more than make up for its shortcomings. The addition of stealth elements create a unique feel and the bottom line is that it is a fun experience that you can come back to. Quite clearly one of the best beat 'em ups to grace the PS2. **Tristan Ogilvie**

THE MARK OF KRI

Why we'd buy it:

- Innovative combat system
- Unique mix of beat 'em up and stealth
- Over the top finishing moves
- Beautiful artwork

Why we'd leave it:

- No big boss battles
- No two-player mode
- Action becomes a little repetitive at times
- Only four weapons to choose

Graphics	Stylish graphics with excellent animation	05
Sound	Grunts, groans, gurgling; sounds and good music	06
Gameplay	Plenty of combos to learn; innovative finishing system	06
Life span	Heaps of extras and mini-games to unlock	07

An enjoyable single player adventure that hacks, stabs and slashes at the beat 'em up stereotype.

OFFICIAL VERDICT



■ **LOVE ME FOR MY MIND!** An unreasonable request when your skirt passes as a belt.



■ **WHACKO** Ulala spots Michael eyeing off a kid in a space suit?



■ **SYNCHRONICITY** Even just slinking down the corridor, it's always in formation



■ **SPACED OUT** With all those trippy '60s motifs, it was only a matter of time till they flapped their arms and tried to fly.



SPACE CHANNEL 5 v2

Ulala pelvic-thrusts her way onto the PS2 with style.



Imagine a world without nuclear weapons. Imagine a universe where conflicts are resolved with the power of dance. Imagine a television network that dresses its news reporters up as go-go dancers. No, these aren't the lost lyrics from a John Lennon classic, they are the concepts contained within Sega's 'peace-lovin' neo-psychedelic rump-shaker, *Space Channel 5 Part 2*.

Taking control of the curvaceous news reporter Ulala, players must tackle what is basically an ultra hip game of 'Simon says' and mimic the dance moves of enemies in order to defeat them and rescue innocents. A robot army led by the enigmatic 'Shadow' is forcing people to dance poorly, and it is up to Ulala to restore co-ordination to the galaxy. This is achieved by simply out-dancing an opponent, giving them a blast with your ray-gun or by shooting a rescue beam at hostages. All of these things need to be done in time with the music in order to be successful. Rescued hostages proceed to dance alongside you, creating a dance procession not unlike a title sequence to an *Austin Powers* film.

Ulala is not only limited to dancing, and at times you'll find yourself in the middle of a walling guitar duel or skin-thumping drum contest. How well you are doing in the game is reflected by the ratings percentage that Ulala receives from her television audience. If her ratings start to slip her feet will start to drag and conversely as her ratings peak she'll start to 'get jiggy wid it'. The more proficient you are at completing the increasingly complex sequences of button-presses the tougher the challenges become, so you can have varying dance paths through the same level depending on your degree of skill.

Whereas the original game was a strict single player experience, *Space Channel 5 Part 2* introduces a two-player co-operative mode. This essentially means

playing through the single player game but sharing the button presses between two people. It's quite fun to try and keep the rhythm between you and a friend, but it would have been nice if the developers had included a few exclusive two-player modes, perhaps where two players have to get their groove on in a head-to-head 'dance off' against each other.

OPS2 defies even the most serious gamer to play *Space Channel 5 Part 2* and keep a straight face. You won't stop smiling, and your toes won't stop tapping. It's an addictive, peaceful experience that is dripping with retro style. However, it is a very short experience. The story mode consists of six levels and can be completed within a couple of hours, and though there are secrets to unlock and a couple of extra modes such as the one hundred level dance marathon, only true beat freaks will have the stamina. Thus Ulala's latest adventure remains a must-buy for any fan of the musical game genre, and a must-try for everyone else. □ Tristan Ogilvie

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

No longer content to just wiggle to the beat of another drummer, Ulala bangs the drum and wields the axe this time around - it provides a much needed break from the dance-thon with laser guns.



DRUMS

Proving pigskin will never be totally outphased.



GUITAR

Despite that rock stars have been replaced by DJs, guitars will be eternal. Unfortunately so are widdly-widdly solos.

SPACE CHANNEL 5 v2

Why we'd buy it:

- It has Michael Jackson in it
- It has simplistic and responsive controls
- It has outstandingly animated dance choreography

Why we'd leave it:

- It has the weird white Michael Jackson in it
- It is a bit too short-lived in the story mode
- We have two left feet

Graphics	Bright, colourful and beautifully animated	08
Sound	Varied, from waltzes to big band to guitar driven jams	09
Gameplay	A little repetitive, but you can't deny that groove	08
Life span	Plenty of secrets to unlock but story modes too brief	07

More style than substance - but well worth a look for music fans and peace lovers everywhere.

OFFICIAL VERDICT



COLOURFUL Since when do lasers come in rainbow colours?

■ **ON YOUR BIKE** The true Star Wars classic.

STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS

A quality Star Wars game, or just another Jedi mind trick?

PUBLISHER: EA
DEVELOPER: PANDEMIC/LUCASARTS
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-2
OUT NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.LUCASARTS.COM
ONX MODE: NO
SURROUND SOUND: YES
WIDESCREEN: YES

■ BACK STORY

Pandemic Studios is a beach-based Californian developer that is deeply rooted in futuristic warfare gaming, having created the Battlezone series. Pandemic has had to push itself in the direction of mech and flight sim territory in order to bring the heavily armoured destruction of The Clone Wars to life.

© 2002 Lucasfilm Ltd. & TM. All rights reserved. Used under authorization. Lucasfilm and the Lucasfilm logo are trademarks of Lucasfilm Ltd. Star Wars Bounty Hunter is a trademark of Lucas Licensing Ltd.



Think back to *Attack Of The Clones* and try to remember what it was that stood out most in your mind. The slushy, handy-holdy romance bit? The gladiator-style arena battle? No, it was scrotum-faced Yoda going all Bruce Lee wasn't it? Second place though, and much more suitable for gaming purposes, had to be some of the most satisfying sci-fi battle scenes ever. So, rather predictably, carrying on where the last merchandise-doused Star Wars movie left off, lumbers a battlefield bruiser which takes a little licence with its licence.

Rather than the real-time strategy game *The Clone Wars* could so easily have become, this immediately struck us as a hovering version of *Star Wars: Starfighter*. Initially, the Campaign missions are a familiar series of aggressive attacks, escorting transports, timed levels and defensive missions. The usual array of weaponry, health pick-ups and power-ups are all present too. Your mission objectives help to mop up what's left of the climactic Geonosis battle from the movie but the game moves the story forward and allows the real Clone Wars narrative to begin.

You take control of either Mace Windu, Annakin Skywalker or Obi Wan Kenobi (sorry, no Yoda) and head the Republic army as it battles Count Dooku and the naughty 'Remnant' forces. Deftly subverted by the frenetic on-screen action, the plot concerns evil pensioner Dooku's search for an ancient Sith weapon with which he can destroy the Republic. It's up to the Jedi to sort it out, apparently by blowing up everything in sight. Your search for the Sith weapon will lead you to several planets including Rhen Var, an icy world where most of the more interesting action takes place. The snowy environment on this wintry planet is a fine example of the game's potential for making large-scale warfare come to life.

Clone Wars isn't just a simple tank battler though. You get to control Speeder Bikes, STAPs (flying robots), Walkers, Gunships and even ride strange beasts in the Wookiee levels. There are also on-foot missions and while this adds variety to the Jedi gameplay, the third-person light saber fights leave much to be desired as there's no real beat-'em-up element – the engine that's used for tanks is the same one that's applied to people. In fact,



■ **HAPPY VALLEY** Stuck in a large canyon, these troops are vulnerable.



PARK AND RIDE

VEHICULAR ACTIVITY

Big tanks, droids and a few surprises, too.



STAP

Seen these in the movies? Belt it through the forests on one of them to escape explosions.



MAARU

Ride a dinosaur with massive guns on its back. Not the best vehicle, but quite cute.



WALKER

The prototype AT-ST is one of the best things in the game. A total powerhouse.

MISSION QUITE POSSIBLE

Mission types can be broken down into four main categories. Here's our guide to the kind of armoured action you'll be experiencing.



ATTACK
Recreate the end of *Attack of the Clones* with this search and destroy flying mission. Blow them to smithereens!



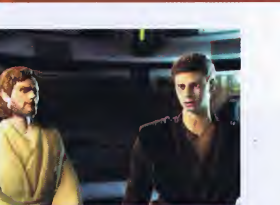
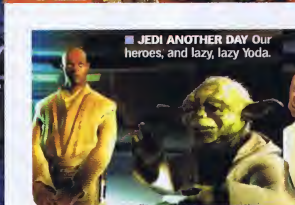
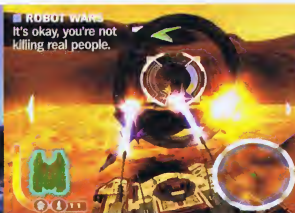
DEFEND
In this snowy scene a ship's gone down and Remnant forces are rushing towards you. Destroy them all.



ESCORT
Transports full of Jedi and turrets are everywhere. Split time between clearing the way ahead and parrying tank attacks.



CHASE
Well, they had to have a speeder bike section in here. Race after droid patrols before they can report back.



one of the game's greatest flaws is its lack of variety, leaving it feeling clumsy and surprisingly uninspired. The vehicular action is frenzied and fun, but we encountered minor slow-down when too much is happening on-screen at once. Despite this, as everything explodes around you, you truly feel like you're in a massive ruck in a galaxy far, far away. However, it's a shame that the developer hasn't really concentrated on distinguishing each element – rather than giving you several truly addictive styles of gameplay, your attention is just shifted between the different vehicles.

Another problem with *The Clone Wars* is that even though you can issue basic commands like 'Regroup' or 'Attack' to your units (a maximum of two) there's no real sense of orchestrating a battle strategy. For all the lively shooting action, there are still times when the game feels like 'a few clone scuffles' rather than a full-on war. Surprise boss battleships at the end of some levels help matters, but there's often no hope of deploying any tactic other than 'keep on dying until something works'.

As the game progresses you'll notice battles becoming more drawn out and intense. While it's good that Pandemic ups the ante and keeps us on our toes, there's no real progression. Even when, later on, we have to battle fierce spirits which guard the tomb of a fallen Jedi, you simply shoot the ghosts' tombs to kill them. It's merely a different flavour of the standard attack-and-dodge gameplay that lurks beneath the *Star Wars* paint job. With no explorative element we're left following direct orders rather than giving them. While there are undoubtedly real high points – the Geonosis and Thule battle missions, for example – there are also troughs like the obligatory speeder bike chase to swallow.

Thank Lucas then for the Multiplayer modes. There's a good variety of one-on-one combat in the variety of available options, comprising the usual mix of skills from deathmatch to defend-the-flag

disciplines. Base building and defence in the Conquest mode is a particularly nice feature that sees you controlling outposts and building defensive turrets – it adds an extra element to the missions, but lacks the wow factor of the major battles. The co-op play in Academy mode has you and a friend defend against waves of enemies, but really only serves to make you think how much better it would have been if you could play the whole game co-operatively.

What would be more fun than having a friend help out defending the rear of a convoy, rather than some terrible NPC whining about how they're taking damage and not helping you at all? *Jedi Starfighter* allowed you to play all its story missions co-operatively.

This game looks great and plays in a satisfyingly destructive way but, unfortunately, it lacks the depth or sense of command that would give the player some sense of achievement amongst the carnage. While it is a brave battler, *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* is another in a long line of franchise games that impresses, but doesn't quite deliver on its promise. **Mark Wyatt**

STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS

Why we'd buy it:

- Fantastic *Star Wars* laser battles
- Great looks, instinctive controls
- Massive scale and multiple worlds to visit

Why we'd leave it:

- Only offers one style of play
- Lack of command and strategy
- We wanted to play as Yoda and slash kneecaps

Graphics

Rain, snow and heat effects, plus great explosions **95**

Sound

Laser blasts and John Barry's rousing score **97**

Gameplay

Samey as hell, but immersive nonetheless **95**

Life span

Solid multiplayer but the campaign's over too soon **95**

One for the *Star Wars* collectors, and a great battlefield game in its own right. Shallow, but still worth investigation.

07

OFFICIAL VERDICT

ACTIVISION ANTHOLOGY

Over 45 Radical Games in One



The Activision classics from the Atari 2600 are back!



RIVER RAID And you thought Ace Combat 4 looked hot



ACTIVISION ANTHOLOGY

Turn your PS2 into an Atari 2600... eh?!



These days Activision are known for publishing PS2 titles like *Tony Hawk Pro Skater 4*, the upcoming *Tenchu* game, and other gems. Back before it started bringing games to Sony's black box, in fact, way before [see Back Story], Activision established itself as one of the pioneer console developers for the Atari 2600 home console of the 1980's. Guessing that many fans of the Atari 2600's Activision titles may no longer have access to one of those retro consoles, they've amalgamated over forty-five games from the ancient black and mahogany console into an Anthology, readily playable on your PS2.

This collection of games, including classics like *Pitfall 2*, *Stampede* and *Chopper Command* have not been given any sort of visual overhaul at all, remaining perfectly faithful to their original release. Activision have however created a nice eighties themed interface for players to use as they move between games and tinker with some of the other title's features. For instance there's a great '80s soundtrack compiled from the original artists including hits such as *We're Not Gonna Take It* and *Walking in LA*, which plays in the background as you game. Also in addition to the actual games are unlockable bonuses which are opened up to players who accomplish certain game tasks, complete with accompanying score board which keeps tabs on what you've unlocked. Most of these unlockables simply open up a function which has an affect on your gaming screen. For instance there's the Cloud-Cover mode which sends a cloud drifting over your game, or Cube mode which pastes your game onto (you guessed it) a rotating cube in the centre of the screen. While these modes are totally ridiculous, they add to the

longevity and good humoured nature of the pack, while the authentic Interface does a good job of adding to the eighties groove.

The real question is whether such an aged anthology has any place in your PS2 collection? Those who loved these games in the past will no doubt enjoy some hands on reminiscence with them again, defending each game's limited gameplay as they're lapping up the nostalgia. For those who never got into the Atari 2600, this anthology will just seem like a collection of prehistoric games, holding about as much appeal as an upbeat TV test pattern. Nostalgia aside, some of the games are quite painful to play through such as the laborious *Oink*, the simply crap *Keystone Copers* and the drawn out *StarMaster*. It's hard to see how anyone, even in the '80s played these games for enjoyment. But as the saying goes, you take the bad with the good, and the better games [see *Four from the Freezer*] still manage to work some charm if you're happy to warp back to the pioneering days of videogaming. **James Ellis**

PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION
DEVELOPER: CONTRABAND ENTERTAINMENT
PRICE: \$49.95
PLAYERS: 1-2
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.ACTIVISION.COM/GAMES/ANTHOLOGY
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO

BACK STORY

Activision was created as a company by four disgruntled Atari workers in 1980, making them the first third-party software developer in videogame history. Their first four games: *Dragster*, *Fishing Derby*, *Checkers* and *Boxing* (all on the Anthology) made the company gross \$70 million that year alone.

ACTIVISION ANTHOLOGY

Why we'd buy it:

- Solid collection of games from that era
- Great '80s soundtrack
- Works out around \$1 per game

Why we'd leave it:

- Not worth considering if you never had an Atari 2600
- They don't make games like they used to - and we're glad

Graphics	The very definition of elementary. But that's the point.	01
Sound	Jvlinr music with the original games beatinr tunes.	02
Gameplay	A mixed bag: Some are classic, others crudly.	04
Life span	A number of patches to win and modes to unlock.	06

If you've become separated from your beloved old Atari for any reason, then look to this collection to fill the void.

06

OFFICIAL VERDICT

FOUR FROM THE FREEZER

With over forty-five games on one disk there have to be some stand out performers. Here's four of the ones that have survived the cryogenic thaw better than others. Some should not be woken up!

■ **Boxing** is still great fun between two mates. Weave, dodge and punch.

■ **Sequest** has players manning an underwater submarine fighting off enemies and rescuing struggling humans.

■ **Decathlon** sees players button mash their way through a variety of different events, including Javelin and the 1500m.

■ **HERO.** - use a small personal chopper backpack to hover around levels and dynamite walls.





CONTRA: SHATTERED SOLDIER

A retro trip back to the days of unforgiving gaming.

PUBLISHER: KONAMI
DEVELOPER: KONAMI
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-2
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: N/A
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO

BACK STORY

Konami have made numerous Contra games through the years, although their PSone versions Contra: Legacy of War and The Contra Adventure were both dire 3D games bearing little resemblance to the classic 2D shooter. This is Contra's PS2 debut and return to 2D.



If there was one thing that clearly separates the games of yesteryear from those that we see hitting the shelves today, it has to be the vast differences in difficulty between the two.

In the past, being touched by either an enemy bullet or one of their minions usually resulted in instant death, while today, it's rare for a game to allow the player to die unless they've made a real meal of things. Now after years of pumping out titles such as the *Silent Hill* series, *Pro Evolution Soccer*, *Metal Gear Solid* and *Zone of the Enders*, Konami bring pay tribute to their roots, resurrecting one of the all time classic shooters, *Contra*.

Contra was, and still is, a 2D shoot 'em up, although Konami have used modern 3D visuals to deliver the same old 2D gameplay that *Contra* made a name for itself with. By providing a fixed viewpoint for each section of the game, whether that be running along the ground, snowboarding down an icy mountain or flying along hanging onto a rocket, the player always knows which way is up, down, left or right, etc. By using the shoulder buttons, it's possible to stand still and fire, using the direction pad or analog stick to aim, or to lock the direction the player is firing in while they move about.

Something that may give shooting game fans the willies is the lack of pickups or powerups, but *Contra* does present the player with three different firearms to use, each with their own special power/shot which are useful in certain situations. This gives the player six basic ways to attack, which is diverse enough in a game so challenging as this. To force the player to try out more than six different ways to try and tackle one of the already tough encounters in *Shattered Soldier* would be very cruel.

Those with a friend who's up for an intense co-operative multiplayer experience will find *Contra's* two-player mode a welcome feature, although it should be noted that playing with the combined firepower of two players on the one screen can get confusing.

MASSIVE MUTANT
Bosses often take up most of the screen.

ARC ENEMY
Lots of enemies have sweeping laser attacks.

After looking at *Devil May Cry 2* this month, we've been subject to two ends of the spectrum when it comes to bosses - Champs and chumps. With most of *Shattered Soldier's* bosses taking up half the screen, in addition to having the ability to flood most of the rest of the screen with bullets, these major encounters will put even the most diligent gamer through their paces. The giant transforming robots and weird and wonderful mutants are brought to life like never before thanks to the advantages of using 3D polygon graphics, and despite the lack of story line, provide enough a spectacular enough challenge to keep things interesting.

Anyone who has never played an old school shooter where it's so easy to die will find *Contra: Shattered Soldier* extremely frustrating, and should arguably go check this game out first before purchasing it to make sure that they can appreciate the challenge put before them. There's no gripping story or flashy cut scenes to draw this out, but rather just five levels of extremely intense shooting action that can be played through in an hour, but will take even the old shooter fans months to ever actually beat. ☐ Dan Toose

CONTRA: SHATTERED SOLDIER

Why we'd buy it:

- An awesome long term challenge
- Fantastic boss encounters
- A good dose of old school gaming

Why we'd leave it:

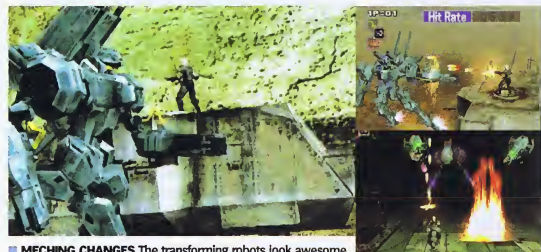
- Not particularly deep
- Can be frustratingly hard
- Games like *ZOE2* are around the corner.

Graphics	An effective union of 2D and 3D.	6.7
Sound	Industrial tunes and explosive booms.	6.7
Gameplay	Not very deep or complex, but very playable.	6.7
Life span	Only the most dexterous and devoted will finish this.	6.6

A fantastic trip down memory lane for old school veterans, but *Contra* may confuse or confound the contemporary gamer.

07

OFFICIAL VERDICT



MECHING CHANGES The transforming robots look awesome.



SWORD OF THE SAMURAI

The thinking man's game of disembowelling your enemies.

PUBLISHER: UBI SOFT
DEVELOPER: LIGHTWEIGHT
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-2
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.UBL.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO



■ BACK STORY

Lightweight's Kengo has, for many, been the be all and end all of Samurai games on the PS2. Whilst other games of its type were thinly disguised slashers, Kengo managed to let depth creep into the mix. With Sword of the Samurai Lightweight hopes to take its success even further.



Effectively translating the world of the Samurai into a video game is a task that has been attempted by many developers over the years to varying degrees of success. The essential problem is the marriage of tactics, action and the implementation of the strict honour code by which the Samurai lived. The results are often superficial slashers or dull strategy titles. Ironically one of the best examples of this genre was *Bushido Blade* way back on the PSone. Kengo is possibly the most noteworthy PS2 Samurai title and it has now been followed by *Sword of the Samurai*.

Like Kengo, *Sword of the Samurai* is more character driven than story based. That is, the goal of the game is to become the ultimate Kengo (Bushido Master) not "Save the Princess from the evil demon" or some similar contrived plot. From the very start you're given complete interactivity and control, being able to choose your Samurai's fighting style, facial type and even the clothes he wears. At the beginning of the game your Samurai is naturally going to be a bit lame and will frequently lose battles and flail about rather uselessly. This may turn out some players off, and those looking for immediate hack and slash thrills will want to turn their attention to Tenchu or other titles. For the patient player, however, *SOTS* has many rewards. It's quite gratifying to see your combat skills increase in a variety of arenas. These include Dojo training and combat training where stats are raised and new fighting techniques learned. For the less honourable Samurai however, there are a series of "Unofficial" fights where victory will garner more rewards but failure will prove fatal.

One of the major flaws with Kengo was that essentially it was a series of increasingly difficult one-on-one combat situations. *Sword of the Samurai* has attempted to fix that with a bunch of more arcade style, optional, mini-

missions. These can include protecting VIPs, escorting wagons or simple assassinations. Graphically *SOTS* is only a slight improvement on its predecessor, with drab colours and merely adequate animation. Pulling off a fluid, useful combo requires hours of character development, along with quite precise timing.

At the end of the day *Sword of the Samurai* hasn't managed to create the ultimate Samurai experience. It's basically Kengo with a few more options. Fans of the original will delight in the expanded gameplay and almost RPG-ish stat building which comes about from sparring and tournaments rather than silly mini-games. Unfortunately, *Sword of the Samurai* may miss a wider audience, as the combat itself can feel quite sluggish and the entourage of enemies repetitive. It's a pity too, because the obvious intelligence and depth of the game itself could have raised it to classic status, but a severe lack of polish keeps it in the "Good for its type" pen. □ Anthony O'Connor

SWORD OF THE SAMURAI

Why we'd buy it:

- It adds depth to a traditionally shallow genre.
- It allows you to create your own Samurai.
- Over 100 types of swords.

Why we'd leave it:

- The combat is often sluggish and repetitive.
- The graphics are rather drab.
- The whole exercise takes a lot of patience.

Graphics

Drab and uninspiring. Adequate but nothing more. **06**

Sound

Predictable slashing, hacking and screaming noises. **07**

Gameplay

Intriguing character building with sluggish combat. **07**

Life span

Long term use for patient players. **08**

SWORD OF THE SAMURAI is a slow, ponderous, but intelligent game that has packs strategy with the gore.

07

OFFICIAL VERDICT



■ SQUATS THE MATTER?
Head shots are flashy, but they need their knees too.

SLAPSTICK SLICING

Along with the stat building combat *Sword of the Samurai* features a series of arcade-like mini-missions, which are essentially time trials to race through a linear level hacking up guys along the way. These often feature a lot of arterial blood spurting and are quite fun.



REVIEW

PRIDE FC



■ **GROOVY GRAPPLING** More realistic wrestling than ever before.



PRIDE FC

The new challenger for the mixed martial arts title wins on a points decision.



PUBLISHER: THQ
DEVELOPER: ANCHOR INC.
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-2
OUT: MARCH
WEBSITE: WWW.THQ.COM/PRIDEFC/
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO

■ BACK STORY

The mixed martial arts fighting games have been totally dominated by Anchor Inc. Pride FC is basically the latest effort, following up on the UFC series which originated on Dreamcast a few years ago. They appear to be getting closer to perfecting the art with each new release.



■ **SNAPI** Fighters now clearly strain against submission holds.



In case you don't have Foxtel, or you do but you're not likely to watch brutish men beating each other to a pulp, a mixed martial arts organization known as the *Ultimate Fighting Championship* (UFC) has been turning heads as 'wrestling for real' for several years, but is now facing real competition in the form of *Pride FC*. The *Pride Fighting Championships* are Japan's answer to the *UFC*, but just because it's Japanese doesn't mean that the roster is limited to an obscure bunch of Asian wrestlers. *Pride* has had encouraged numerous *UFC* warriors to make the move across the pacific, replacing the overly specialised octagon cage fights for more traditional arenas, battling in boxing rings to packed stadiums.

Pride FC's obvious adversary to overcome is the 'looks familiar' factor, as it is based on very much the same engine and control system that the *UFC* series has. Unsurprising when it's from the same developer as the *UFC* titles, but Anchor Inc. dealt with the issue by doing the respectable thing and upping the level of realism, both visually and in terms of combat mechanics.

Better visuals are a universally popular improvement but what will really appeal to fighting game fans is the extra detail that now exists in the grappling and submission system compared to the *UFC* titles. While *UFC* allowed the fighters to take down their opponents, and go for a mount (getting on top of your opponent to pummel them while keeping them pinned), the number of options and animations were minimal, taking away from the feel of the bout being a natural free-flowing fight. *Pride FC* takes the grappling system to a new level, with more animations, each more fluid and believable than anything seen in *UFC*. Now when a fighter rushes his opponent and tries to slam them into the canvas there's a real sense of momentum about the visuals that make things feel right. Moving from one position to another once a mount or grapple begins happens more often, and looks more realistic, more like a pair of guys struggling on the ground than a step-by-step picture show of 'how to wrestle'.

With most mounts resulting in the fighter on top either beating their opponent to unconsciousness, or getting in a good submission, it's great to see that *Pride FC* has made it much easier for the person on the receiving end to get out of a submission if they've got the energy to fight back. If one fighter goes for an arm-lock on another, unless they've suitably softened their opponent up, the other player will see their fighter strain long enough for them to counter and get out of the move.

While *Pride FC* has vastly superior customizable entrance scenes, with actual video footage spliced in to give things a totally authentic look and feel, a more robust create-a-fighter system, bios and info on the fighters (of which there are loads), and basic improvements in terms of moves available, it still has to deal with the same hurdle *UFC* faced, and that's its own 'hardcore' factor. Being a realistic fighting simulation that encourages the player to choose their moves carefully and time things exactly, the average punter may find *Pride FC* difficult to pick up and play. However, looking better than any of the *UFC* games in the past, *Pride FC* is undeniably more accessible, and with its large list of minor improvements over its predecessors deserves to be the fighting game that drives newcomers to the genre more seriously. □ **Dan Toose**

PRIDE FC

Why we'd buy it:

- Far more attractive than *UFC*
- Better grappling and submission system
- Loads of authentic *Pride FC* content for the fans

Why we'd leave it:

- Not that different to *UFC* games
- Requires practice and patience to appreciate
- We're put off by buff men in togs.

Graphics	Detailed combatants with fluid animation	08
Sound	Adequate limb popping sounds and announcers	07
Gameplay	Refines the <i>UFC</i> formula to a new level	08
Life span	Create-a-fighter mode gives <i>Pride FC</i> long legs	08

The new king of the ring! *Pride FC* is the most realistic fighting simulation available on any gaming system to date. Great stuff!

08 OFFICIAL VERDICT



■ **KNOCKED FLAT** King hits can flatten opponents in a single blow.



■ **PULL MY FINGER!** Sorry, but digit manipulation allowed.



■ **IN COGNITO** The Groucho Marks kit won't cut it Pac-Man

■ **WHERE AM I?**
New to Pac-Man,
but hardly original.



■ **BLAND-LAND** Hardly a trip through Wonderland...

PAC-MAN WORLD 2

Don't feed this Pac-man game any credit.



You have to hand it to old Pac-Man. He practically embodied the '80s lifestyle with his gaudily colourful yellow form, terrible eating habits and consumption of problem solving pills.

Most importantly though the games that got him recognition were damn fun. But times have changed and Pac-Man World 2, sequel to the PSone platformer, is simply out of its league on the PS2.

As the story goes, Pac-man's beloved Pac Village has been robbed of some rather important golden fruit. This has prompted the release of the nasty ghoul Spooky who, along with some ghostly thieves, spreads each piece over seven differently themed levels. It's now of course up to Pac-Man, that archetype of Pac masculinity to traverse each level collecting pickups and defeating end of level bosses till all the golden fruit is returned.

Overall PW2 is a very standard 3D platformer borrowing a ton of elements from past games of the genre. There's little originality regarding the themes for each level, with the game spreading the quest over tree tops, snowy mountains, underwater, lava and ghost levels to name a few. From a design perspective the game is a hodgepodge of ideas and concepts. For instance you'll move through a linear level and be reminded of Crash Bandicoot as you bounce and destroy crates, yet on other levels you'll find yourself running from massive snow boulders in a scene ripped straight from Sega's Sonic Adventure. Pac-man's abilities have also been wrenched from the great big book of seen-it-before platformer moves. None more so than the metal type powerup that grants Pac Invincibility and greater weight so he can move underwater and destroy crates like in Mario 64.

Such artistic license would be acceptable if PW2 contributed any sort of gaming innovation to the existing pool of ideas, which unfortunately it doesn't. It's also kept in some of

the worst conventions and common problems of old platform games that current developers have since conquered. For instance, there are too many inconsequential pickups to collect, the levels are often painfully linear and the difficulty of the game is horrendously inconsistent. One moment you'll be screaming at the machine as you fall down the same gorge for the umpteenth time, and other times you'll find the game offering explicit instructions on how to overcome a boss.

A lot of the difficulty that exists in the game can be traced to the game's biggest fault, that being the camera angles. There's no means to change the perspective, even when you feel it's necessary, and it rarely allows you a good look at your surrounding environment, leading to Pac's demise all too often.

Polished? No. The presentation of the game is forgettable. The graphics, while clean and cute, don't illustrate great design, nor will the sound have you tapping your feet. No sir, there simply wasn't enough effort put into making Pac-Man World 2 a competitive title to go up against the PS2's existing platformers. □ James Ellis

PAC-MAN WORLD 2

Why we'd buy it:

- That perfectly spherical round ball of yellow is just so charming
- You get access to the original arcade games

Why we'd leave it:

- Falls in many basic areas
- Game is very short
- Chock full of useless collectables

Graphics	Tries to look like a cartoon, but winds up looking plain.	25
Sound	No voice samples and forgettable music.	24
Gameplay	Extremely linear design with a horrid camera issues.	23
Life span	Original arcade games are the only thing worth playing.	24

Apart from being surrounded by superior examples of the genre, Pac-Man World 2 underwhelms on its own merits.



OFFICIAL VERDICT

■ BACK STORY

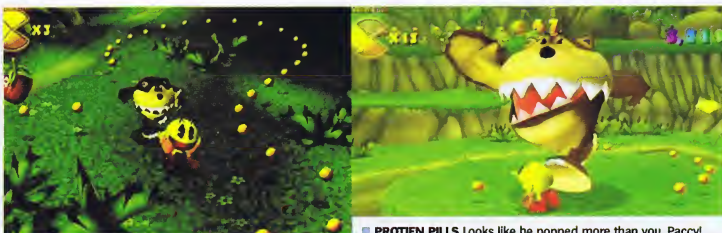
PUBLISHER: NAMCO
DEVELOPER: NAMCO
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-2
QUIT: NOW
WEB SITE:
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: YES
SURROUND SOUND: NO

Namco began as a company in 1955 when the founder started running a rocking horse amusement ride on top of a department store. After acquiring Atari (Japan) in 1974 Namco entered the coin-op business, when in 1980 they released their mega hit Pac-Man. Apart from games their company activity also includes restaurant operations.

ATTACK OF THE PAC

Fancy a run of the old-school Pac-man?

The best part of PW2 is the arcade house in Pac Village that allows you to access some classic Pac-Man games so long as you've collected enough tokens in the main quest. There's the original Pac-Man, Pac-Attack, Pac-Mania and Ms Pac-Man. There's also a maze game done with the new 3D engine simply called Pac-Man World 2.



■ **PROTEIN PILLS** Looks like he popped more than you, Paccy!



WHO'S LORRY NOW? A bonus is payable if you make it to your destination on time.

LONG DISTANCE 'Unique' gameplay doesn't always make for 'interesting' gameplay.



HAULIN' ASS Biker gangs and over zealous cops add a little pep to your driving duties.



KEEP ON ROLLIN' Don't stop for jackies, baby-Bob...



JACKKNIFE Don't approach BMT with a GT3: A-Spec attitude.

BIG MUTHA TRUCKERS

10-4 rubber ducky! The redneck racer drags its knuckles onto PS2.

PUBLISHER: EMPIRE
DEVELOPER: EUTECHNIX
PRICE: TBA
PLAYERS: 1
OUT: NOW
WEB SITE: WWW.BIGMUTHATRUCKERS.COM
GEN: PS2
SCREEN: NO
SOUND: YES

BACK STORY

With previous titles such as Max Power Racing, Le Mans 24 Hours and 007 Racing for PSone, Eutechnix specialises in workmonlike - If quirky - racing titles. The only previous bid to transfer the joys of long haul truck driving to PS2 came in the form of Sega's 18 Wheeler, which started life as an onsize arcade cabinet with an enormous steering wheel. It made for an entertaining coin-op, but didn't translate well to a console. Like Big Mutha Truckers, it was limited and one-dimensional.



TRUCK ME, THIS IS one bad mutha of a game and it's not the sort of title you'd ask your gran to buy you for Christmas. Fret not though, as this is an eventuality that's unlikely to happen - for Big Mutha Truckers is a game that is as pedestrian as its brain-bypass of a name suggests.

The premise is not a sophisticated one: select your character from one of four cousin-lovin' hicks, hop aboard your rig and haul a whole range of merchandise (including everything from crude oil to, er, wood) between cities. It's a concept that's not entirely dissimilar to that of Sega's 18 Wheeler but with some tagged-on primitive resource management.

Rather than being a point-to-point racer, Big Mutha Truckers allows you to drive freely between cities. This isn't as big a thrill as you might think - the 3D environments are wide, often empty and far from gripping. On your arrival at each destination, you are given the option of trading goods, upgrading your vehicle, gambling your savings or borrowing more cash for dodgy deals.

You begin the game with \$25,000 in hard cash and how you spend it is entirely up to you. Each time you reach a city you'll have to expend a certain amount on fuel and repairs - the trick is to balance this with keeping back enough funds to acquire goods. Suffice it to say, it's not so much Wall Street big business as backyard market trading.

The majority of the game is spent trundling back and forth between cities - that's what truck drivers do after all. There's no real urgency to most of these journeys and, seeing that you're driving a truck, your progress is hampered by sluggish handling and an

average speed that is likely to leave you asleep at the wheel. Additional thrills occasionally occur when you're challenged to races or find yourself under attack from Hell's Angels who attempt to pinch your goods (although you simply swing your trailer from side to side in order to shake them off). The only real sense of pressure is the fact that you have a total of 60 journeys to complete to beat the game. To pad out the A-to-B-back-to-A trudge, there's also a task-based Mission mode.

If all this sounds like there's not a whole lot going on, that's because there isn't. Indeed, in the early stages, realising you'll make a profit of \$40,000 dollars on a shipment of canned peaches you're flogging to a redneck store owner is about as thrilling as it gets. All of which leaves you with that empty feeling you get when you know your PS2 is capable of so much more. Proof then - if any were needed - that a game cannot exist on bad puns alone. □ Oliver Hurley

BIG MUTHA TRUCKERS

Why we'd buy it:

- Sega's 18 Wheeler was fun but far too short
- White trash chic is all the rage
- It's the closest we can get to being Stallone in Over The Top

Graphics

Bland environments make for tedious long hauls

Sound

GT-style radio stations but too much comic par

Gameplay

You trade, you drive. You trade, you drive.

Life span

Plenty to do but it soon becomes repetitive

Why we'd leave it:

- Gameplay so plodding it almost comes to a standstill
- Little variety in the tasks
- We'd much rather be driving a Nissan Skyline

Once the thrill of driving a large lorry wears off (and it won't take long) BMT is slightly less entertaining than hoovering.

05

OFFICIAL VERDICT

HOW TO...

BE A HUGE TRUCKING SUCCESS

There's more to truck driving than just, um, driving, you know. The crux of the game rests on trading goods so you'll need to suss out which items are in demand and where.



On arrival at each city, you'll encounter all manner of shady characters.



The type of goods you're able to buy depends on the sort of trailer you're towing.



A load of steers and hogs are only \$3 more expensive than a truck of mobile phones - who'd have thunk it?



Loan sharks can come in handy early on - just make sure you don't forget to pay them back...



REVIEW

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING 2/MONOPOLY PARTY



PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM
DEVELOPER: ACCLAIM
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-4
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.LEGENDSOFWRESTLING2.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO

KARMA SUTRA
"Now turn me over and tie me up in the ropes".



SIT UP!
LOW2 is actually a workout video.

RIGGED? Roddy slips Sid some dosh to take a fall?

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING 2

Pile drive your way into this retro spandex sequel.

X Legends of Wrestling 2 is the latest 'Beefcake soap' offering from Acclaim, featuring an amazingly huge roster of sixty-five wrestlers of yesteryear, cartoon styled character models and a complex grappling system that allows for precise execution of combination moves and reversals. Such features quickly distinguish LOW2 from the other wrestling titles out there, but while there are some things to admire about LOW2, there are also some nasty flaws to the game which hinder its potential.

For a start there are some nasty frame-rate issues that become apparent when there are multiple wrestlers in the ring, and collision detection for the striking moves is an unconvincing as the real thing was in years gone by. Animation is a mixed bag, with throws and grapples looking cool, only to have the wrestlers hobbling around like they're made out of dead wood the rest of the time. The player is struck by these flaws as soon as they pick up the controller, while they should be indulging in an instantly accessible brawler. The aforementioned grappling system takes some getting used to as well, meaning new

players can't just jump in and have anything resembling a competitive game with a more experienced player.

The game includes the usual wrestling options, including create-a-player, story based career modes and a host of unlockable characters and abilities, and is certainly worth a play for the wrestling freak who still knows who Killer Kowalski is. In fact, the best feature of Legends of Wrestling 2 would have to be its assortment of interviews, giving old-school wrestling fans a chance to see the people behind their favourite ringside personalities. Those who want action over authenticity should wait for Def Jam. ☐ James Ellis

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING 2

Why we'd buy it:
- Great assortment of some of wrestling's finest

Why we'd leave it:
- The WWE games are better and more accessible

Graphics 06 A decent offering let down
Sound 05 by some stilted gameplay
Gameplay 06 and dated visuals. For true
Life span 07 wrestling nuts only.

06

OFFICIAL VERDICT



MONOPOLY PARTY

All the fun of playing Monopoly... sans the fun.

PUBLISHER: INFOGRAMES
DEVELOPER: RUNECRAFT
PRICE: \$69.95
PLAYERS: 1-4
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.MONOPOLYPARTY.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO



Monopoly Party is a funny little game. Funny peculiar, rather than funny "haha". The premise, for those who have never seen the board game, is the acquisition of money and property and the monopolisation of the board at the expense and eventual financial ruin of your competitors. Such blatant, heartless consumerism might not sound like good old family fun but the board game has been a fixture in houses the world over. The question must be asked then, why make a PS2 version of it?

Monopoly Party basically has two modes: Monopoly Party and Original Monopoly. The latter plays exactly like a digitised version of the board game. That is, each player waits his/her turn to go around the board, buying and selling, wheeling and dealing. The titular 'Party' mode plays a little more like a dog's breakfast. Everybody seems to take their turn at the same time and the thoughtful strategising that makes the board game so much fun is lost in favour of what almost feels like random button mashing. Not helping matters is the fact the game board looks tiny and poorly rendered, leading



EXTREME 'POLY
Pretty flash, but what's the point on?

to much squinting and cursing. Board games have never really made smooth transitions to the video game world, especially with the advent of 'Living board games' like The Sims, but Monopoly Party really is one of the most poorly conceived creations ever to sully the black box. It's literally easier and cheaper to play the board game.

Ugly, hard to see details and ultimately pointless even rabid fans of the board game will have to admit Monopoly Party is one social gathering to avoid like the plague. ☐ Anthony O'Connor

MONOPOLY PARTY

Why we'd buy it:
- The dog at the board game along with the homework

Why we'd leave it:
- It costs more than the board game, and isn't as good

Graphics 03 A pointless and irritating
Sound 02 title that is hard to
Gameplay 02 imagine anyone finding
Life span 01 favour with.

03

OFFICIAL VERDICT



BOARD YET?
Give it a few more minutes.



CRUSTY DEMONS
Who needs bikes eh?



AIR IN THE TYRES
Plenty of air under them anyway.

ATV2: QUAD POWER RACING

Quad you looking at? Get on yer bike.

X Quad biking doesn't quite have the same instant appeal as other virtual activities, like snowboarding or being Rocky. Consequently, games like ATV2 really have to dance like a trained monkey to impress. Faced with that challenge, ATV2 makes a real effort to get its groove on.

There's a generous helping of options – the Challenge section will bring back fond memories for any of you who remember Kick Start – but the main focus of the game is carving up the countryside in a series of high-octane races. The action is spikey, the presentation energetic and racing is given depth with a speed boost power-up that's awarded for various tricks, so getting around the track in style means you'll also get around it quicker.

This set-up should make for a sweetly balanced game, but, unfortunately, the control system undermines it all. The main problem lies in the suspension preload which you need to build up to execute really huge jumps. You do this by pressing **LB**, a perfectly reasonable system, but the game isn't quick enough to reward perfect timing.

The 'big air' feature is just one of many fields in which this game is inferior to SCE's *ATV Offroad*.

ATV2: Quad Power Racing is by no means a terrible game, but for all its vigour and eagerness to please, it lacks both the polish to make it a satisfactory sim and the messy thrills that spice up more arcade-based efforts. Quad bike games have to be exceptional to warrant recommendation – this just doesn't make the grade. **D** David Harrison

ATV2: QUAD POWER RACING

Why we'd buy it:

- Packed with options and offers really challenging driving

Why we'd leave it:

- There are better Quad bike games out there

Graphics

05

Decently playable ATV

Sound

05

effort, but one that's more

Gameplay

04

likely to frustrate than

Life span

04

truly excite.

05

OFFICIAL VERDICT

PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM
DEVELOPER: CLIMAX
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-2
OUT: NOW
WEB SITE:
WWW.AACCLAIM.COM
60HZ MODE: YES
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO



GRUBBY Is it destined to be a laundry detergent ad?



ALPINE RACER 3

You'll take to great heights, you'll reach insane speeds, you'll doze off.



PUBLISHER: NAMCO
DEVELOPER: NAMCO
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-2
OUT: NOW
WEB SITE:
WWW.NAMCO.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO



When you first put *Alpine Racer 3* on you'll notice it starts out in typical Namco fashion featuring a long introductory FMV with clichéd game characters speeding down walls of snow, somersaulting over each other and continuing to frolic along at high speed.

After playing the game for only a short while though you'll quickly wonder why at least a smidgeon of the creativity featured in the Intro wasn't included in the game itself. Whilst the game looks okay and totters along at a smooth frame-rate, the gameplay seems to have no redeeming features at all. You'll head into the main Extreme Winner's Cup mode, choose a skier from a moderate roster and then hit the slopes – only to find that playing AR3 only requires the use of one of the analog sticks as you steer yourself around each course. None of the other buttons on the control pad do anything interesting at all. Whilst there is a trick button you can only perform a single no-risk trick with each skier, with the computer taking over and automatically performing a trick for you when launching off

the larger jumps so it can cut to a pointless cinematic camera angle. Where is the game in that?

Whilst progression through the game unlocks new circuits and equipment, it simply isn't a fun enough experience to contemplate going through with.

The one on one two-player mode also adds no value to this already woeful game, cutting the draw distance up for each player to the point that it's like you're racing in a blizzard. **D** James Ellis

ALPINE RACER 3

Why we'd buy it:

- Generates a good sense of speed

Why we'd leave it:

- Repetitive gameplay with very little to actually do

Graphics

05

Sound

04

Gameplay

03

Life span

02

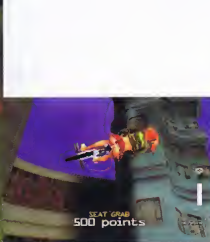
A game truly in need of some large bulky ski-like peripheral to be any fun at all.

03

OFFICIAL VERDICT



DRAB Forget any notion of picturesque mountainscapes. The ground always fills most of the screen.



BMX XXX

Wanna see naked chicks? Go rent a porno.

X So it's got breasts in it. Real, live, ample breasts. Or as Acclaim fondly calls them, 'funbags'. So if cleavage was the critical element that was going to persuade you to go and buy **BMX XXX**, you're in luck. However, before you rush out to purchase it, you might like to consider that the titillation factor of the unlockable striptease boobey dancers is minimal. Your average copy of Cleo is steamier, and doesn't require you to jump through hoops for a peve.

For the frustrated gamer, it'll come as a right tease to discover that actually watching these brief titty vids first involves you having to play the BMX part of the title. And this boils down to **Dave Mirra BMX 2** with a few new environments, a dose of Jackass and some innuendo that would make folk like Benny Hill cringe. There are level objectives to complete, a create-a-biker option and two-player games – but none even come close to the mastery of the game they ape – **Tony Hawk's 4**. **XXX** is repetitive, has poor collision detection and the trick system is depressingly simplistic.

We could argue that some of the levels – Las Vegas in

particular – are well designed, but space is tight. Plus, we're too wound up by the patronising undertones of **XXX** that assume all gamers are sweaty perverts who only laugh at dick jokes. In reality, the only rude thing about **BMX XXX** is the publisher's notion that someone who forked out nearly one hundred dollars for this game would forgive its inadequacy for the sake of a few well-proportioned body parts. If it's the smut that has you curious, think of other dirty material you can pick up for that amount of money. Small wonder that **Dave Mirra** chose not to have his name attached to the game. **George Walter**

BMX XXX	
Why we'd buy it: – Two great big reasons	
Why we'd leave it: – Boobs or no boobs, this is a shoddy game	
Graphics	05
Sound	08
Gameplay	04
Life span	04

Surprisingly, we hoped this might've been a laugh. We didn't even smile once.

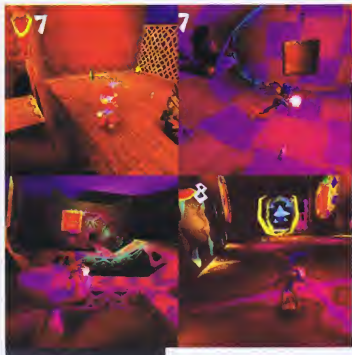
04

OFFICIAL VERDICT

PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM
DEVELOPER: Z-AXIS
PRICE: \$49.95
PLAYERS: 1-2
OUT: NOW
WEB SITE: WWW.BMXXXX.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO

TURNING TRICKS If you want some real BMX action, you're better off sticking with **Mat Hoffman**.

MONEY SHOT Some pubescent boys will find the odd thrill here.



JINX

Will this be the final platformer on the Psone? Let's hope so.

X Here we have an out and out, no frills, kiddy platforming romp that sees the player controlling **Jinx the Jester** on his quest to rescue kidnapped members of his royal family. There's nothing surprising about how **Jinx's** quest is structured, in fact any player who's played a platform game in the last seven years will get the drift as soon as they enter the central hub world which branches off to the game's seven different levels. Complete one world and the next world becomes available.

On your quest you'll come up against enemies which you can dispatch in textbook fashion. Stomp on their heads from above, or swing your jester's staff and deliver a couple of crashing blows on their brow disintegrating them into a non-bloody whirling pop of star dust. As a jester, you also have magical powers enabling you to drop anvils on the heads of your enemies, or cast them into a makeshift bottomless pit if you have a spare magic hole on you. Kudos to **Hammerhead** for working the theme into the gameplay.

There's the standard switches to be hit, crates to be pushed and jumping to be performed, but unfortunately despite all this action **Jinx** will be struggle to hold the attention of anyone who's played a few platform games. **Jinx** is simply far too similar to other games in the genre and avoids taking any risks at being original. The levels are nicely designed, full of colourful textures, and there are a couple of nice effects to be found here and there. **Jinx** is a tidy enough platformer, but without an original hook it's a "Me too!" game. **James Ellis**

PUBLISHER: SCEE
DEVELOPER: HAMMERHEAD
PRICE: \$49.95
PLAYERS: 1
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: N/A

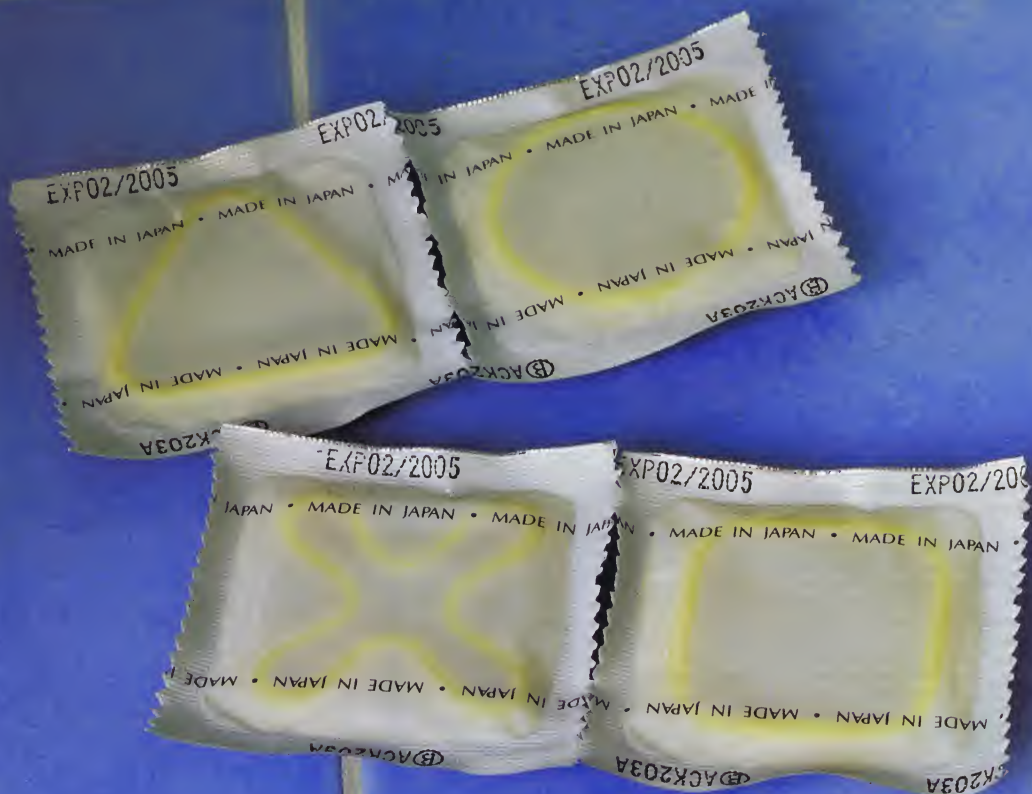
PSone™

JINX	
Why we'd buy it: – Colourful worlds and heaps of platforming activities	
Why we'd leave it: – It's all a little too familiar – Familiar camera problems	
Graphics	08
Sound	08
Gameplay	05
Life span	04

A pleasantly polished platformer that simply fails to deliver original gameplay.

05

OFFICIAL VERDICT



**DVD
OF THE
MONTH**



Austin Powers In Goldmember

The International Man Of Mystery visits the Seventies to prove his mojo's still working.

FILM: The world's highest-grossing comedy franchise returns for a third bout of silly spy antics. This time round Austin's dad Nigel (Michael Caine) has been kidnapped and taken back in time to the Seventies by pervy Dutch metallurgist Goldmember – who, naturally, is plotting global domination with Dr Evil. It's up to the big-toothed swinger to travel to 1975 and rescue pops with the help of sexy FBI agent Foxy Cleopatra (Beyoncé Knowles).

The disco era setting is ripe with comic potential and Mike Myers makes the most of it – packing the movie with outrageous outfits, groove-tastic dance routines and more gold lame than you'd find in Tony Blackburn's wardrobe. New characters Nigel and Foxy slot perfectly into the madness with Michael Caine parodying his Cockney wide boy persona to great effect. Beyoncé meanwhile, does her best Pam Grier impression.

With all this in its favour it's disappointing that Myers virtually just repeats gags from the two previous films. Once again it's left to Dr Evil and Mini-Me to provide all the belly laughs and whenever that double act isn't on the screen *Goldmember* is hit and miss at best. **6/10**

EXTRAS: There's a fair old selection, but it's a case of quantity rather than quality. The pile of featurettes cover the likes of Cockney rhyming slang, Seventies fashion and Austin's patriotic motor pool, but they're all fairly short and insubstantial. Best of the extras are the breakdowns of three big musical set-pieces, and the amusing commentary by Myers and Director Jay Roach. **6/10**

VERDICT: It has its moments, but as the jokes become ever more familiar, the series has the whiff of a *Saturday Night Live* skit stretched way beyond its limits. **C LH**



Director Jay Roach
Starring Mike Myers, Beyoncé Knowles, Michael Caine, Verne Troyer, Seth Green
Distributor Entertainment
In Video
Out Now
Price \$29.95
Extras Jay Roach and Mike Myers commentary; MI-6: International Men of Mystery: Fashion vs. Fiction; Disco Fever; English, English; Creative Convergence; Confluence of Characters; Opening Stunts; The Cars of Austin Powers; Featurettes: Anatomy of Three Scenes; Music: Videos: Rock Track Trailers.

THE DISCO ERA SETTING IS RIPE WITH COMIC POTENTIAL AND MIKE MYERS MAKES THE MOST OF IT

YOU'RE GORGEOUS Great legs, a distinctive smile, fabulous dress sense... And that Beyoncé Knowles ain't bad looking either.

EXTRA! EXTRA!

The featurette *Confluence of Characters* provides an analysis of the movie's main players, from *Goldmember* to Austin himself. But to be perfectly honest, all we're really interested in is the gorgeous Foxy Cleopatra, aka Beyoncé Knowles in her movie debut. We've adored the bootylicious Deshaun's Child since for a long time – so long in fact, that the restraining order has almost expired – but judging by the praise heaped upon her by the filmmakers, they were putty in her hands, too...



Mike Myers (Austin Powers)
"Beyoncé is maybe the most likeable on-screen presence, right out of the gate, that I've seen in years. She understands soul cinema, she just totally got Foxy."

John Lyons (Producer)
"She absolutely had the energy of it and the sassiness of it. And good humour and warmth. And she was sexy and funny. She was just a total pleasure."

Jay Roach (Director)
"Beyoncé is a musical sensation. She can sing and dance and she's so beautiful. She writes all her own songs and produces them. She's phenomenal. She's electric."

Recommended viewing for your PlayStation 2 cinema system.

The Royal Tenenbaums

Director Wes Anderson/Starring Gene Hackman, Ben Stiller, Gwyneth Paltrow, Luke Wilson, Owen Wilson, Anjelica Huston, Danny Glover/Distributor Buena Vista/Out April 30/Price \$429.95



FILM: Wes Anderson assembles a stellar cast for his irresistibly eccentric follow-up to offbeat comedy *Rushmore*. Gene

Hackman is Royal Tenenbaum, the estranged head of a family of brainy misfits slowly collapsing in on itself in a torrent of red Adidas tracksuits, tennis tantrums and hopeless crushes on adopted siblings. When Royal turns up on the doorstep claiming to be dying, the prodigal father is taken in, his presence somehow providing the catalyst and the cure to a variety of lifelong neuroses. With note-perfect performances from the ensemble cast [the masterful Hackman is a

standout] and a non-stop barrage of hilarious set-pieces, *The Royal Tenenbaums* is a leftfield gem – unpredictable, playful and at times truly moving. The sight of Ben Stiller and his sons hanging off the side of a garbage truck, carefree smiles plastered across their faces, is worth the money alone. **8/10**

EXTRAS: Besides an amiable commentary by Wes Anderson, we get interviews with all the main cast, a brief selection of deleted footage and the excellent *With The Filmmaker* – a video diary-style documentary following Anderson throughout the production. **7/10**

VERDICT: As poignant as it is funny, this is the cleverest, most endearing comedy since *Rushmore*. ☐ LH

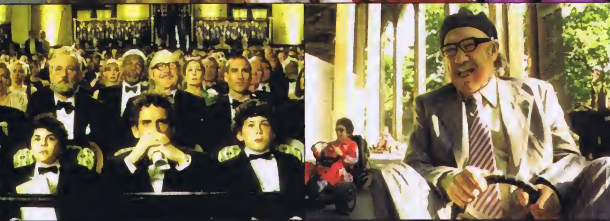
■ **THE ROYAL FAMILY** More oddballs than *The Addams Family*, distinctly less yellow than *The Simpsons*.



EXTRA! EXTRA!

What do you get when you cross Larry Sanders with Michael Parkinson?

The *Peter Bradley Show* is a fantastic spoof interview featurette where Mr Bradley quizzes bit-part players from *The Royal Tenenbaums*. Topics discussed include how many different intonations they can deliver their one line in, and what their regular jobs are. Suffice to say it degenerates into surreal madness and conversations about whether corrugated steel can be sold door-to-door. It can't.



■ **DANGEROUS?** Not until she finds where her trigger finger goes.



Murder By Numbers

Director Barbet Schroeder/Starring Sandra Bullock, Ben Chaplin, Michael Pitt, Ryan Gosling/Distributor Warner Home Video/Out March 19/Price \$36.95



FILM: In a straight pinch from Hitchcock's *Rope*, two gifted high school students attempt to commit the perfect murder just to see if they can get away with it. But with homicide detective Sandra Bullock on their trail (and doing her best

Clarice Starling impression) they're playing a dangerous game of cat and mouse. A passable thriller cobbled together with ideas taken from numerous superior films, this never rises above the distinctly average. **5/10**
EXTRAS: There's a fairly interesting commentary by Director Barbet Schroeder and his Editor Lee Percy, but nowt else apart from the trailer. What's the input from the lovely Sandy? **3/10**
VERDICT: Is this the bit where we label it a Crime Thriller By Numbers? Yes it is. ☐ LH



The Office - Season 1

Director Ricky Gervais/Starring Ricky Gervais, Martin Freeman
Distributor Roadshow/Out Now/Price \$46.95



FILM: The workplace may not be funny by nature, but the BBC's brilliant comedy series *The Office* provides a hilariously succinct take on life at work. The staff include Brent the Incompetent middle manager, his brown-nosed PA, the popular, hard-working guy kept in a dead-end by the manager and the secretary that he has a thing for. Although Gervais's universally annoying character dominates the show a bit much, this spoof of a fly-on-the-wall documentary works because it showcases all the bitterly true office gossip and co-worker relations that we, as expendable employees, normally can't laugh or moan about. **8/10**

EXTRAS: A forty minute "How I Made the Office" documentary by Gervais, looking at the series conception, pilot, etc. **4/10**
VERDICT: A wonderfully witty laugh at the slave and grind. ☐ DT

■ **LOOK FAMILIAR?** Lazy, dazzy clothes and you're better at his job than he is. Yep, it's the boss.

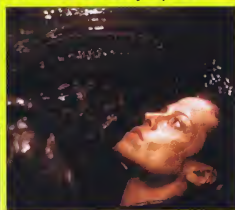


DVDS YOU MUST OWN CROUCHING TIGER HIDDEN DRAGON

In which Chow Yun Fat and Michelle Yeoh kick ancient Chinese ass, Ziyi Zhang persuades the male population to give subtitles a punt and director Ang Lee further proves the assertion that he can do no wrong. Like its title suggests, there's more here than meets the eye.

PS2 EGGSTRA

Hidden DVD treasures for your pleasure.



ALIEN

WHAT TREAT'S IN STORE? You'll find a log written by Ash the android to his superiors. Here he gives information about the various lifecycles of the aliens that the ship has come across, before they take one back to Earth.
WHERE IS IT? In the Special Features menu, press ↓ until you come to a highlighted pool of acid. Press Enter to go to an Info screen about the lifecycles of the infamous xenomorph.

SEND US YOUR EASTER EGGS

Spotted a DVD bonus, have you? Then drop us a line at OPS2@derwentthoward.com.au and let us know where and how you found it.

This month includes: Breaking into the industry, broadband queries and games as stress relief.

The cover art for Battle Engine 01 features a large, blue, mechanical insect-like creature with multiple limbs and a segmented body, set against a dark background. The PlayStation 2 logo is in the top left corner, and the Battle Engine 01 logo is at the bottom.



**Come
press my**



The logo for the video game "Space Channel 5 Part 2". It features the words "SPACE" and "CHANNEL" in a bold, purple, sans-serif font at the top. Below them is a large, stylized purple oval containing a white number "5". To the right of the "5" is a small "TM" trademark symbol. At the bottom, the words "Part 2" are written in a similar purple font. The entire logo is set against a yellow background with a faint, repeating pattern of the word "SPACE" in a smaller font.

PlayStation.2



OVER
\$3000
WORTH OF
PRIDE FC
PRIZES TO
WIN!

FIGHTING TO AFFORD YOUR COPY OF OPS2?

SUBSCRIBE SAVE & WIN!

OWN THE LATEST,
GREATEST FIGHTING
SIMULATION ON EARTH...

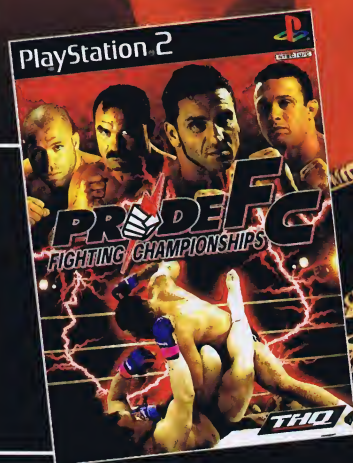
PRIDE FC

FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIPS

"THE NEW KING OF THE RING" - OPS2

**EACH WINNER'S PRIZE
PACK INCLUDES:**

**1 X PRIDE FC GAME
1 X PRIDE FC VIDEO
1 X PRIDE FC T-SHIRT**



**WHY PAY FULL PRICE? SUBSCRIBE AND HAVE
OPS2 DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR FOR LESS!**

SUBSCRIBE TO WIN ONE OF 25 PERFECT PRIDE FC PRIZE PACKS!

++ SUBSCRIBE TO OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE THIS MONTH TO HAVE A CHANCE AT GRABBING A COPY OF PRIDE FC FOR PS2, A PRIDE FC VHS VIDEO AND AN EXCLUSIVE PRIDE FC T-SHIRT!

++ WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?" ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS COMPLETE THE FORM ON THIS PAGE OR REGISTER VIA OUR 136 116 HOTLINE. WANT TO DO SOME SERIOUS GAMING THIS MONTH? THEN THERE'S NO BETTER SOLUTION THAN A SUBSCRIPTION TO THE OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE...

**++ 6 MONTHS FOR \$49.95
SAVE \$39.75 OFF COVER PRICE**

**++ 12 MONTHS FOR \$125.00
SAVE \$54.40 OFF COVER PRICE**

**++ 24 MONTHS FOR \$189.95
SAVE \$168.85 OFF COVER PRICE**

**++ RETURN BY POST TO:
"OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE"
REPLY PAID 4967
SYDNEY NSW 2001**

++ OR CALL:

136116

**++ LINES ARE OPEN
8AM - 8PM MON - FRI & 8AM - 6PM SAT
(COST OF A LOCAL CALL FROM ANYWHERE IN AUSTRALIA)**

**++ OR SUBSCRIBE ONLINE AT:
op2.magshop.com.au**

1. YOUR DETAILS

TITLE ☐ MR ☐ MRS ☐ MS ☐ MISS

Name _____

Address _____

Suburb _____

State _____ Postcode _____

Country _____

Email _____

Telephone (Inc. area code) _____

☐ Tick if you do not wish to receive information about special promotions from Derwent Howard and carefully selected partners.

2. PLEASE TICK ONE BOX

AUSTRALIA

☐ **Easy payment plan** Please debit my credit card now for \$62.50 and for each 6 month period from then on.

To ensure I receive uninterrupted delivery of *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*, please renew my subscription each period upon expiration at the same fee unless otherwise agreed. I understand I'm under no obligation to continue my subscription beyond the nominated period. Unless I cancel my subscription, I understand my subscription will continue and my account nominated below will be automatically billed.

☐ One payment of \$49.95 for 6 months **SAVE \$39.75 OFF COVER PRICE**

☐ One payment of \$125.00 for 12 months **save \$54.40 OFF COVER PRICE**

☐ One payment of \$189.95 for 24 months **SAVE \$168.85 OFF COVER PRICE**

NEW ZEALAND

☐ One payment of \$133.95 for 12 months **save \$69.45 OFF COVER PRICE**

3. METHOD OF PAYMENT

☐ **Cheque** Please make payable to Derwent Howard Pty Ltd.
(AUD\$ drawn on an Australian bank account)

☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa

Card No

Expiry date /

Signature _____ Date _____

CLOSING DATE: 19/03/03
ORDER CODE: OPS12

PlayStation[®]2

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-AUSTRALIA

01 THIS OFFER IS OPEN TO ALL RESIDENTS OF AUSTRALIA WHO SUBSCRIBE FOR A MINIMUM PERIOD OF TWELVE MONTHS TO OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE BETWEEN 19 FEBRUARY 2003 AND THE LAST MAIL RECEIVED ON 19 MARCH 2003.
02 ENTRY IS SUBJECT TO THE CORRECT USE OF A VALID CREDIT CARD OR IF PAYMENT IS MADE BY CHEQUE THE CHEQUE MUST BE CLEARED FOR PAYMENT. SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE TO BE SENT TO OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE, REPLY PAID 4967, SYDNEY, NSW 2001.
OR BY PHONE 136 116 FREECALL MONDAY-FRIDAY 8AM-3PM EST AND SAT 8AM-6PM EST. EMPLOYEES OF THE PROMOTER AND THEIR IMMEDIATE FAMILIES, AND AGENCIES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROMOTION ARE INELIGIBLE FOR THE OFFER.
03 EVERY PERSON WHO SUBSCRIBES TO OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE, OR RENEWS THEIR SUBSCRIPTION TO OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE DURING THE PROMOTIONAL PERIOD WILL BE IN THE RUNNING TO RECEIVE A PRIDE FC PACK.
PRIZES ARE COURTESY OF THO.
04 THE PROMOTER ACCEPTS NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR LATE, LOST OR MISDIRECTED MAIL.
05 ALL ENTRIES BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE PROMOTER.
06 THE COLLECTION, USE AND DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION PROVIDED IN CONNECTION WITH THIS OFFER ARE GOVERNED BY THE PRIVACY NOTICE.
07 GIFT WILL BE DELIVERED SEPARATELY FROM YOUR SUBSCRIPTION WITHIN 28 DAYS OF RECEIPT OF FIRST SUBSCRIPTION ISSUE.
08 THE PROMOTER IS DERWENT HOWARD PUBLISHING PTY LTD, PO BOX 10371 BONDI JUNCTION, NSW, 2022.

HARDCORE

Tips, tricks, cheats and challenges courtesy of Official Tips Mag!



Violence. It's a mug's game... unless it's in our GTA: Vice City full guide and walkthrough – in which case it's a right laugh. And dead useful, too. Same goes for 'the knowledge' on how to survive your Getaway shenanigans, while the rest of our tips are packed with all the tactics you need to win in style. Fair ain't always fun!

Richie Young

Richie Young, Official Tips Guru

IN HARDCORE THIS MONTH

086 ...GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY...TIPS
088 ...GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY...GUIDE
090 ...THE GETAWAY...TIPS
090 ...SUPERMAN: SHADOW OF APOK...CHEATS
090 ...GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY...CHEATS
090 ...STAR WARS: SUPER BOMBAD...CHEATS
090 ...NEED FOR SPEED: HOT PURSUIT2...CHEATS
090 ...MINORITY REPORT...CHEATS
090 ...BMX XXX...CHEATS



DO YOU WANT MORE?
From the OPS2 crew, a guide-mag devoted to GTA: Vice City

WALKTHROUGH

GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY

Fancy completing the Protection Ring Asset and taking those first faltering steps to city-wide domination? Then read on...

DRIVE TIME

Yup! The car's the star in this little jaunt through the nuances and subtleties of Vice City's cars, roads and bikes.



TAKING THE CORNERS

Every hard corner (90° plus) will be tough to take at top speed, but if you must, don't decelerate, just handbrake turn. Hold the handbrake until you're almost spun in the direction you need to go, take your finger off for a brief second to kick your acceleration back in and then re-apply it if you need to correct and overturn.

SPIN-OUTS

Getting slammed from the side while travelling at speed is a sure-fire way to have the car spin out from under you, but you can combat it so it stops quickly. Push the steering wheel in the direction opposite to the spin, force the accelerator as far as it'll go and combine the handbrake. The car will probably oversteer in the direction you're pressing. If it does, just reverse the process to combat that.

BIKES

The best thing about bikes is their durability. Pummel them endlessly and they'll only take minimal damage. Get extra distance on a jump by pulling back on the stick and wheelieing into it. It's also good to use the wheelie to land a long jump, whereas pushing forward on the stick will give you more control on landing a shorter jump.



GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY

■ PLAYERS 1
■ MEMORY CARD SPACE 1.888KB
■ DIFFICULTY AVERAGE
■ COMPLETION TIME TWO WEEKS
■ REVIEWED OPS2#08

VERDICT

"Vice City is a groovy lump of gaming goodness that surpasses GTA III in every aspect. A must-have PS2 title."

Graphics 9.5 Overall
Sound 10
Gameplay 10
Life span 10

BONUS MISSIONS

How to make the most out of all those tricky vehicle missions.



FIREFIGHTER

Twelve missions of flaming madness. Search out the burning car and put it out with the hose using **Ⓢ**.
Reward: Never again will you be set aflame out of a car



PIZZA DELIVERY

Ten missions where you have to deliver a piping-hot pizza super quick to all those needy, hungry people.
Reward: 150 maximum health



PARAMEDIC

Rescue the lame and deliver them to the hospital. Keep the run as steady as possible or you'll jolt the poor buggers' health down.
Reward: Infinite sprint ability



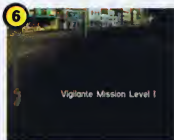
ICE CREAM

Get in your Mr Whoopee vehicle and deliver the ice cream to the poor people who are over-heating on the baking hot city streets.
Reward: Points



TAXI DRIVER

Not the Robert De Niro style. This one picks up fares and delivers them in a set amount of time.
Reward: Extra suspension when you're driving taxis



VIGILANTE

Using a variety of law-enforcement vehicles, you too can take on the city's criminal element.
Reward: 150 maximum armour

WEAPONS

Vice City offers more uses for your weapons than any other GTA game before it. So if you wanna get gun happy, you better pay attention, punk!

ACCURACY

You can point where you want the bullet to go – the Sniper Rifle can take the head off a mosquito at 200 metres. Pressing the **Ⓢ** button to target automatically will, in some instances, slip into a weapon's First-Person mode – so you can do damage to heads, car tyres, even police vehicles. We love shooting through the car windshields; a good shot will take a cop's head off while he's still driving. If you're accurate, you can use the momentum of the car to wipe out a bunch of innocent bystanders. Classy and fun.

CARS AS WEAPONS

You can jump from a moving vehicle. Not only does this allow you to bail on a damaged motor, but you can turn it into a flaming missile of destruction. Aim the near-dead car at a target and get up to full speed a few seconds before impact. Bail, and the car will sail gloriously on, taking the target straight to hell.

DRIVE-BYS

In true gangster style, you can get behind the wheel and kill bystanders with badly placed bullets. Slow down before selecting **Ⓢ** or **Ⓢ** and hitting **Ⓢ**. Don't do it at full speed as the bullets are likely to miss the target. It can be best to do this in a slow-moving gas-guzzler, just to make sure you can reign it in.

AIMING

The auto-aim can be your best friend in a crowd of folk. Combine this with a shotgun and you'll be knocking people off their feet left, right and centre. Use **Ⓢ** to target, fire once then press **Ⓢ** once again to re-target. It's as simple as that – but oh-so-effective when you know how.



■ **FLAMING CHEEK** Great weapon, shame there's no one to use it on...

GENERAL LAYOUT



■ **MAPPED OUT** The on-screen readout is often the only way to find out exactly where you are.

1 The Northern end of the island is called Vice Point. It's the more affluent area of town, where the majority of speedy roadster-type cars can be found. In it you can find Vice Point Mall.

2 Drive south almost half way and you'll eventually reach Washington beach. The middle belt contains a hardware store, a Spray And Pay and the lawyer's office. The police station is also situated here, bang in the middle of the map.

3 Further South is Ocean Beach. It's got another Spray And Pay, a gun shop and the hospital where you'll recover from the severe police beatings you receive. It also contains the area where you'll save the game, on the eastern strip of road.

4 When the mainland opens up, you can cross over via one of the three bridges. The bottom lump of land is Starfish Island. The middle section is Leafy Links and the top one is Prawn Island.

5 On the mainland, the Northern Section is known as Downtown. It has, at the very north west, a stadium and a helipad. There's an Ammunition quite near the top as well, which is useful.

6 Just over the third way mark southward is Little Haiti, which is home to another Pay And Spray.

7 The mid-southern belt of the land is Little Havana, home to the Screw This tool shop, and also home to the

Cuban gangsters. The police station is also there, and is situated on the east coast.

8 The Southern tip of the land is the Industrial area, with another Pay And Spray.

9 The western spur of the land has the Escobar Airport and the Military Base.

10 The stretch of beach on the east of the map will take you from the tip to the end and vice versa in ultra-fast time (in an off road vehicle).

→ IN THE BEGINNING

A Get in the car provided and drive to the hotel. Walk in the front door and save, then go to the pink marker to start your glittering career as a crimelord. Enjoy this moment while you can, because from here on in things are going to get really hairy. At this point, it's a good idea to take some time out and get used to your surroundings and the controls; you might even like to deal out some beatings.

AN OLD FRIEND

A Next stop is the seedy office of a two-bit lawyer called Rosenberg. Be warned: he's a man of far too many words – and he seems to be in a panic about something.

THE PARTY

A After his deranged ramblings have finally ceased, head to Rafael's as fast as you can to pick up some hip threads. In your new suit, steal the tasty-looking BIKE that some fool leaves unattended, and get to the party. You'll get a quick introduction to some colourful characters, then you get the enviable task of escorting Mercedes to the Pole Position club. It's very close by – an easy \$100.

- Street outfit (the one you start with) delivered to safehouse(s) and soiree outfit delivered to Rafael's
- The little house icon indicates that the strip club here is available for you to buy and use as a safehouse later on

BACKALLEY BRAWL

A Back to Rosenberg's office, and the next lead is a 'limy' music industry guy called Kent Paul, who can usually be found at the Malibu. You can't miss it, it's the pinkest building in the world. Follow his advice and head for the chef of the hotel on Ocean Drive. He's standing in a little back alley, so beat the crap out of him with **Ⓢ** and nick his PHONE. You are a criminal after all. That's not the end of it, though. Lance comes up and presents himself as an ally – better trust him for now, since there's a load of angry chefs after you. Stopping to try and kill them only risks getting damaged yourself, so sprint after Lance with **Ⓢ** and get in the cool INFERNUS with him. Go check out the Ammo-Nation store and remember, you can only hold one of each of the eight weapon types at any time. One kind of pistol, one kind of shotgun, and so on. Get back to the hotel for a sweet \$200 mission reward.

Once in the hotel, you'll get a call on the stolen mobile. Could this be another lead? Hmm... if you fancy it, you can change clothes in your room before leaving for Rosenberg's again.

JURY FURY

A You have to intimidate some jury members as a favour – easy peasy. Pick up the HAMMER and head to the first target. You can do them in either order: the pink arrow will appear over a lone car in one instance – trash the car with your

hammer until a cut-scene begins to play – and over the juror himself in the other.

We trashed his car, then threatened him by pointing a gun at him. He panicked, ran to his car, then the cut-scene automatically kicked in (presumably when he realised his vehicle was knackered) and we earned our \$400.

You'll now get a call from your concerned boss, checking on your progress.

- Get to the payphone next to the mall in Washington for a phone call

RIOT

A Another favour, another distraction from the business at hand. Pah. Well, best get Avery Carrington's problems sorted. For the second time, Rafael's will kit you out in appropriate garb – workers' overalls this time (what a great place Rafael's is). You need to head to the strike, which is right next to the bridge, and start fighting with at least four other workers to get a riot going.

Once everyone's fighting, there are three vans to destroy. Two are easy – a single shot to the nearby explosive barrel takes them out. The other is trickier – we'd recommend shaking off any workers attacking you, then getting in and ramming a wall a few times before getting out and back to a safe distance. \$1,000 is yours.

- You can now accept missions from Avery Carrington
- After a phone call, a new contact is opened at the Marina at Ocean Beach

TREACHEROUS SWINE

A Head to the new contact area, at the Marina. This now replaces Rosenberg's office as the place to go for plot-related missions. And guess what? Your first assassination already. Oh, and get this, you're given a CHAINSAW. Gonzales is the hapless target, and it's a simple matter finding his hotel. After a short cut-scene you'll have to run after the fat fool with two of his bodyguards on your ass. You run slower while holding the chainsaw, so unequip it and hold **Ⓢ** for a burst of speed, then equip it again – he only takes a brief slash. Deal with the bodyguards, then quickly find a car to escape the police, who are suddenly very interested in you. This is where you get introduced to the Pay And Spray, so nip in and heave a sigh of relief. \$250, thanks very much.

MALL SHOOTOUT

A Tapir snout, anyone? Er... anyway... another favour to perform, this time involving meeting a courier at the mall. Sounds simple enough. But just to be on the safe side, stop by the nearby Ammo Nation first and pick up an INGRAM MAC10. When you get to the mall, head up the escalators to meet your contact who is, of course, French. Sadly, the deal is interrupted by a load of gendarmes, and he scarper. He heads right for a nippy little bike around the corner – if you so desired, you could destroy it before meeting him and cut off his escape route. If you decide to chase him down, ignore the other bike placed temptingly in your path and carjack something a bit sturdier – at this stage bikes are too difficult to control – you want to just stomp him. Do whatever it takes to kill him. Knock him off then just reverse over him, pull up alongside and blast him with the Ingram then pick up the GUIDANCE CHIPS and burn rubber back to the Marina for your \$500 reward.

GUARDIAN ANGELS

A On your way to the Marina, you are told there's a nice bit of hardware secreted away in a multistorey car park, and it's got your name on it. When you get there, you'll find both the RUGER ASSAULT RIFLE and – yes! – Lance. Next stop is the back alley where a deal is taking place, and you and Lance take point. Several cars full of Cubans will arrive, so let rip with the Ruger. Don't forget that it's **Ⓢ** to aim, not

Ⓢ. Run down the steps to make life easier, and to be closer to the biker. Ah yes, the biker. After killing all the Cubans – without letting either Martino Diaz or Lance die, of course – two guys on Sanchez bikes nip in and steal the money. Diaz kills one of them, but the other escapes, so run up and get the bloodied bike and give chase. You have to be quick, though. If you let him get through the initial alleyways, you'll fail the mission. Keep up with him, firing with whatever Uzi-equivalent weapon you've got, until you kill him. Pick up the suitcase and return it to Diaz for his undying gratitude and \$1,000.

THE CHASE

A You've got a new boss in the form of Diaz – follow the D on your map to Starfish Island and his palatial estate. Someone's screwing him out of 3% and it's up to you to find out where the cash is stashed. Follow the pink marker, pilfering Diaz's INFERNUS if the whim takes you, until you reach the thief's apartment block. Check his window when prompted, then run after him to the roof. It's a good idea to scout this route out before activating the last checkpoint so that you know where all the ramps and planks are, but this is entirely optional.

There's a puny FAGGIO SCOOTER waiting for you at the end – sadly, you can't park a fast car here in advance because when you get back to this spot it will have disappeared. Basically, he runs across the rooftops, stopping to detonate some barrels about three quarters of the way along (breathe carefully to avoid being set on fire). He then jumps off the end, gets in his BF Injection and you need to chase him all the way to a big house in Prawn Island. Stay far enough back so that you're out of range of his rifle, but don't lose track of him. All you have to do is wait until he runs inside, you'll then pick up your \$1,000. Another job successfully completed and another very happy boss.



PHNOM PENH '86

A Despite the confusing name, this mission is pretty straightforward, and a hell of a lot of fun. Lance flies a CHOPPER, you hang out of the side and machine-gun gangsters around their sunny villas. You'll take on little groups of them one at a time, and neither Ammo nor the 'copter's health should run out. Once you've cleared enough of them out, you'll have to run in on foot and take out half a dozen or so more hoodlums – not a challenge with that beast of a gun. Run to the roof, pick up the CASH and you'll be airlifted out and given \$2,000. You'll also get a call from the Colonel asking for help and, intriguingly, a storm warning stating that the bridges to the mainland are now open.

THE FASTEST BOAT

A Diaz wants you to go to the newly opened mainland and steal a powerboat for him. It's a simple mission, complicated only by the fact that the boatyard is crawling with hoodlums. On the way there, check out a little building opposite the enormous docked ship for some BODY ARMOUR. The best way to deal with these punks is to drive straight in,



hopefully running one or two of them down, then dive out and run into the building in the middle. There are three lairy workers with various tools in there who'll have a pop, but killing them increases your wanted rating – it's your call. Activate the switch by walking up to the pink object, which lowers the boat into the water and activates a load more hoodlums who run in towards you. Now you've got a machine gun, you can pretty much just hold down **○** and take them all down with minimum aiming. Get in the POWERBOAT and head straight for the marker – it's very close. Whatever wanted rating you have when you reach it will disappear. A pretty easy \$4,000.

SUPPLY & DEMAND

A Great mission, this one. Again it's from Diaz, and again it involves that powerboat. First, you need to race four other boats to a yacht to make a deal. Instead of following the others around to the right of the island, which leads into a series of tricky, tight turns, head around to the left and cut back in, saving time and trouble. After you get to the yacht, Lance takes over the controls and you have to defend your boat from the others who are now chasing you. First, destroy the boats behind you, then the helicopter above, then the gunmen on the jetty (who are foolishly loitering around explosive barrels) and last, but not least, one more boat ahead of you to complete Diaz's last mission and receive a whopping \$10,000.

- **Tracksuit outfit delivered to Jackspot in Downtown**
- **Encouraging, non-specific phone call from Lance**

SIR, YES SIR!

A It's time to go back to Colonel Cortez in the Marina. He wants yet another favour. Tsk. Excitingly, though, it's to 'acquire' a piece of military hardware. A TANK. In fact, a tank that's part of a military convoy that will kick your arse if you look at them funny. Clearly, lateral thinking is required here. You can't just run up and get in the tank because the game tells you that you have to lure the occupants out first. Parking a car in front of the convoy doesn't work – a soldier just drives it out of the way and, as you can imagine, trying to outgun them is foolhardy. You have to distract the soldiers, and the best way to do that is to run over them, then run away extremely fast. Stay clear of the tank and take the soldiers out carefully – they pack a solid punch, more than enough to knacker most vehicles in seconds. Commandeering one of the PATRIOTS can only help, but the ultimate goal is to get right up close to the RHINO TANK unmolested, target and kill the soldiers, then get in and drive off. An automatic self-destruct sequence is initiated, but the lockdown you're aiming at is only a couple of streets away, so you've got plenty of time to play around with your new toy. Drive it into the garage, get out and \$2,000 is yours.

- **Phone call from Paul. New missions in Malibu**

DEATH ROW

A Paul is your new employer, and he's got a doozy for ya. Diaz has kidnapped Lance and is torturing him at the junk yard. Time is of the essence in this tough mission, so you'll need a fast car – an Infernus, or a Cheetah or similar. We also strongly recommend picking up some BODY ARMOUR from the Ammo Nation at the south end of the island. When you leave the Malibu, take the road left, and keep going until you get to a right-angle left turn. This will take you over the bridge almost all the way there, and it doesn't matter if you take some prangs on the way – in fact, it's preferable. You'll face a barricade at the junk yard gate. If your car is spewing smoke when they start firing, there's a good chance it will catch fire – you can roll out of the way with **○** as it ploughs into their cars, causing mass destruction and saving you the bother of killing the first few guys yourself. However, this manoeuvre is rather difficult to engineer. A more sure-fire method is to pull into



the road on the left-hand side, just before the barricade, and snipe the cars they're hiding behind until they explode. The shotgun is highly recommended for the junkyard itself – it targets the nearest threat with **○**, and one shot will guarantee a kill. Run towards the yellow marker, tapping **○** to continually re-target goons, until you reach LANCE. He's in the shack at the end with three guards, so make sure you don't shoot him. All that remains is to activate his little cut-scene, run around to the left, get in the SENTINEL and speed along to the hospital – trying to avoid being rammed off the road by Diaz's men in nippy sports cars. The hardest mission yet, and no reward.

- **Cortez calls and is in need of your help to sort the French out**
- **You can now do one last Diaz-related mission, as well as Cortez's stuff**

RUB OUT

A Ricardo Diaz killed Lance's brother, then kidnapped Lance himself and tortured him. Time for some payback. You may have noticed that, after the last mission, Diaz's mansion appeared again as a mission point. This time, you won't be doing his dirty work, you'll be cleaning up. After kitting yourselves out with some new toys, it's a pretty simple matter to work your way around the front, then side of the mansion, through the maze to the interior and on to the final showdown by his office. Move slowly through the mission, using **○** to make sure you see what's coming up ahead. The machine gun you have is very accurate, but there's a risk of running out of ammo. Diaz himself is an easy target – you can get him long-range with the Ingram; just press **○** and hold down **○**. For this easy mission, you get a staggering \$50,000 – plus his house! Nice.

- **Obtain Diaz's mansion on Starfish Island**
- **Paul calls. He wants you to visit his recording studio (Love Fist icon appears on map)**
- **Sonny calls. He's keeping an eye on you**

SHAKEDOWN

A Simply walk forward to start this – the first mission of your official bid to take over the city. It seems simple in theory – within a five-minute time span, drive to the mall and smash the windows of five stores, convincing them of the necessity of your protection. Getting to the mall isn't a problem – it takes roughly a minute and a half – but once inside, there are a hell of a lot of windows to smash on two different levels, and it can be disorientating. The more you smash, the more likely it is that you'll attract the attention of a cop, and risk getting busted. Cunningly, one of the stores here has a change of CLOTHING for you, which will shake them off your tail if they get too meddlesome. It's not fool proof, though. If you've got a particularly high wanted rating and there are multiple cops right on you, they'll see you change your clothes and won't be fooled. Any weapon will do to destroy the windows, but make sure you smash them all – you'll know when you have, because the shopkeeper will make some whiney comment. As any of you who have played GTAIII will know, the best weapon of

all is a car, and – wouldn't you just know it – there's an Infernus display model situated at the top-right of the ground floor. Use this car to either ram said or, even better, use in conjunction with your Uz/Ingram to drive-by the windows. It's a hell of a lot quicker than Shanks' pony, but it obviously can't make it up the escalators. You can use the car, you can use grenades to get multiple windows at once, but the simplest way is just to use the machine gun, target the book and jewellery stores from long range, run up and spray Vinyl Frontier, get the top floor of Gash and lastly, the Tarbrush Cafe. You get a modest \$2,000 for finishing within the limit, and don't worry – your wanted rating will disappear.

- **You can now buy other properties by pressing **○** at the special house icon**
- **Carrington calls to encourage you to explore the real estate market**

BAR BRAWL

A Compared to the last three missions, this one is terribly easy. A bar is apparently being protected by a gang of thugs and doesn't need you. Time to take care of business. Get in the Sentinel (not the Infernus as it's only a two-seater and you've got two mates with you) and drive up to the first checkpoint. It's a classic drive-by set up, so cruise slowly past the marked men and pump them full of lead.

You now have five minutes to get the rest of the gang, so go to their nearby headquarters. You can drive straight into the little yard area, but it's less messy to get out and just use a shotgun to keep targeting and killing them. Two bikers get away and trash your ride, so jack the nearest car and give chase. Run them down a couple of times each, and that's that. Only \$4,000, though.

- **Lance calls you up and complains that you haven't been treating him right. Looks like he's getting rather greedy...**

COP LAND

A There are three distinct stages to this mission. First, get in the Sentinel and drive to the lockup (it's marked on your map). You need to lure two policemen in here and get their UNIFORMS – as luck would have it, every car holds two cops. Troll around until you find a patrol car then fire a few bullets at it until it follows you. Drive straight into the lockup and it should follow, activating the cut-scene. Sometimes the cops will around uselessly for a bit, but it shouldn't be too hard to get two of them – make sure nothing is impeding the door to the lockup.

Once you're in uniform, get the SQUAD CARS from around the corner, and drive very slowly and carefully to the door closest to the Tarbrush Cafe. Park it immediately outside the door, so it's facing the road. Trust us, you'll need it. If you like, you can – at this stage – practise the shortest, quickest route back to your estate. It will take some time, but may well be worth it.

Once you're ready, wander in and arm the bomb by walking into the marker, then sprint out as quickly as possible and get back to the car. Drive back to your pad as quickly as possible – with your high wanted rating, all kinds of law enforcement agencies will be after you, trying to force you off the road.

Keep a cool head, steer carefully, and if your car is set on fire, jump into one of theirs – but don't drive off without Lance! Take the same route back that you used to get to the mall – it has very few tricky corners, which can often slow you down and leave you open to a good ramming from the cops. Run into the marker by your front door, and that's the Protection Ring Asset complete!

- **The Vercetti estate now generates daily revenue that you can pick up**
- **The cop outfit is now available**
- **Lance calls up, warns you not to patronise him like his brother used to**

The guide to the remaining Vice City missions follows soon!

CODE-U-LIKE

Need to cheat your way to victory on a certain game? Write to us and we'll ease your pain.

■ SUPERMAN - SHADOW OF APOKOLIPS (SLES 51230)

Finding the man of steel's tasks a tad too handle? This collection of codes should have you playing like a super hero in no time.

All of the following codes are to be entered in the Cheat Code section in the options menu.

Effect	Code
Infinite Superpower.....	JOREL
Infinite Health.....	SMALLVILLE
Unlock all movies.....	LANA LANG
Unlock all biographies.....	LARA
Unlock everything.....	MXYZPTLK
Unlock hard mode.....	BIZZARO

■ GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY (SLES 51282)

Sick of the sight of Tommy Vercetti, but still keen to hang in Vice City? Complete the look. These codes are entered during gameplay.

Red Leather

→, →, ←, ↑, ↓, ←, ↑, ↓, →

Candy Suxxx

⊙, ⊙, ↓, ⊙, ←, →, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙

Hilary King

⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, →, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙

Ken Rosenberg

→, ⊙, ↑, ⊙, ⊙, →, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙

Lance Vance

⊙, ⊙, ←, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙

Love Fist 1

↓, ⊙, ↓, ⊙, ←, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙

Love Fist 2

⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, →, ⊙, ←, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙

Mercedes

⊙, ⊙, ↑, ⊙, →, ⊙, →, ↑, ⊙, ⊙

Phil Cassidy

→, ⊙, ↑, ⊙, ⊙, →, ⊙, ⊙, →, ⊙

Ricardo Diaz

⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ↓, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙

■ STAR WARS: SUPER BOMBAD RACING (SLES 50204)

Codes to make the Force stronger with this one. All of the following codes are to be entered at the main menu screen.

Unlock Naboo Kaadu racers

⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙

Unlock Shaak racers

↑, →, ↓, ←

Unlock Unlimited boost

⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙

Unlock Space Freighter

⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙

Unlock Arena Battle tracks

↑, ↑, ↓, ↓, ↓, ←, →, ←

Unlock Death Star mode

⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ↑, ←

Unlock Super honk

⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙

Unlock Race backwards

⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙

Unlock Fast and Small racers

⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙

■ NEED FOR SPEED: HOT PURSUIT 2 (SLES 50713)

Here's five another five cars to take for a spin on top of the five we gave you two issues ago. For all these cheats go to the main menu screen and enter the code.

Unlock McLaren F1 LM

⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, →, ⊙

Unlock Porsche Carrera GT

←, →, ←, →, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙

Unlock Mercedes CLK GTR

⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ←, ⊙, ←, ⊙

Unlock Pursuit Mustang Cobra R

←, ⊙, ←, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙

Unlock McLaren F1 LM

⊙, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, →, ⊙, →, ⊙

■ MINORITY REPORT (SLES 51258)

Here's an assortment of cheats and codes for help or laughs respectively.

Enter all of these codes at the cheats screen, found under special at the main menu.

Cheat	Code
Nara Hero.....	WEIGHTGAIN
Moseley Hero.....	HAIRLOSS
Nikki Hero.....	BIGLIPS
Clown Hero.....	SCARYCLOWN
SuperJohn Hero.....	GNRLINFANTRY
Convict Hero.....	JAILBREAK
Robot Hero.....	MRRROBOTO
Zombie Hero.....	JAMRODEAD
Lizard Hero.....	HISSSSS
Super Damage.....	SPINACH
Dramatic Finish.....	STYLIN
Wreck the Joint.....	CLUTZ
Free Aim.....	FPSSTYLE

■ BMX XXX (SLES 51365)

Here's an assortment of codes to unlock your favourite character' bikes.

Enter all of these cheats screen found under 'Acclaim Extras' at the main menu screen.

Bike	Code
AmishBoys Bikes.....	AmishBoy1699
HellKitty's Bikes.....	HellKitty487
Itchli's Bikes.....	Itchli594
JoyRide's Bikes.....	Joyride18
La'tey's Bikes.....	Latey411
Manuel's Bikes.....	Manuel415
Mika's Bikes.....	Nutter290
Nutter's Bikes.....	Itchli594
Rave's Bikes.....	Rave10
Skeeter's Bikes.....	Skeeter666
TripleDub's Bikes.....	TripleDub922
Twan's Bikes.....	Twan18

PlayStation
POWERLINE

**CALL
1902 262 662**

MAIN MENU

HINTS & TIPS
(\$1.98/ MIN) PRESS 1

HARDWARE SUPPORT
(\$1.98/ MIN FOR NON
WARRANTY CALLS) PRESS 2

CUSTOMER SERVICE
PRESS 3

HINTS & TIPS MENU

LIVE OPERATOR
PRESS 1

**PRE-RECORDED
CHEATS**
PRESS 2

HINTS & TIPS

Live operators available between
9am-8pm EST 7 days.

Pre-recorded cheats use the
SLES / SCES code printed on the
game's disc.

HARDWARE SUPPORT

Hours of operation are
Mon-Fri 9am-5pm EST

CUSTOMER SERVICE
Hours of operation are
Mon-Fri 10am-6pm EST

THE GETAWAY

Your bird's dead, your son's been abducted and going straight is no longer an option. Welcome to London's gangland.

TOP TIPS

Your guide to surviving the Getaway onslaught.

GET BACK-UP

Weirdly, the police can actually be useful to you. If you're engaged in an almighty gunfight and the police arrive, keep out of the way and they might actually take a few bad guys out for you. If the cops are diverting attention from you it can only be good.

RUN AWAY

If you get shot up badly, run away to a quiet area and lean against a wall to recover energy. The bad guys will rarely follow to an already cleared

area. Always lean on a wall so that you're facing in the direction of any potential trouble, though.

CASE THE JOINT

Often, trouble won't kick off until enemies realise you're packing heat. So keep your guns safely holstered and get to know an area before you take on the mission. That way you'll learn the layout and find out where the best hiding places are.

FIGHT A GOOD FIGHT

It's war on the streets of London. Fight smart.

KEEP YOUR DISTANCE

The key to success in a combat situation is taking the enemy out from a distance. If they get close, they'll pistol whip you and this takes you down much quicker than a volley of bullets. If you do get taken out with the butt of a gun, make a mental note of where that enemy came from and next time you can take him out from a safe distance.

THROUGH THE WINDOW

Enemies in a room won't generally attack you until you enter that room. So, if there are windows

or glass walls in a room, position yourself so that your gun is trained right on the enemy, then let fly so that your first few shots take out the window and the next couple take out the bad guy.

HUMAN SHIELDS

Enter a public place with a gun and civilians go mental. You can use them as human shields but it's not always useful. Instead, stand in among the fools and concentrate on targeting enemies. Better to efficiently take out the bad guys (while allowing the public to take the occasional bullet for you) than take a hostage and draw attention to yourself.



PROMOTION

PlayStation®2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-AUSTRALIA

PS2 CHEATS X SMS

THANKS TO **OPS2** AND **SIRIUS**
TELECOMMUNICATIONS, NOW
YOU CAN GET HOT PS2 CHEATS
ANY TIME YOU WANT VIA SMS!



This is an **EXCLUSIVE** service to **OPS2** readers.
Every week we'll publish new cheats for the hottest PS2 games.
Each SMS cheat message will cost you \$2.48.

CALL 1902 246 029

and punch in the 5-digit
code for the cheat you need!

You'll get an instant SMS message
back with the cheat details!

PlayStation.2
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-AUSTRALIA



Calls are charged at \$2.60 per call (incl GST).
Calls from public or mobile phones are higher.

PIN	GAME	CHEAT
13161	Grand Theft Auto Vice City	Health
13162	Grand Theft Auto Vice City	Armour
13163	Grand Theft Auto Vice City	Floating Cars
13164	Grand Theft Auto Vice City	Weapons
13167	Grand Theft Auto Vice City	Unlock Tank
11301	Tony Hawks Pro Skater 4	Matrix Cheat
11302	Tony Hawks Pro Skater 4	Unlock Skaters
11303	Tony Hawks Pro Skater 4	Perfect Ralls
11304	Tony Hawks Pro Skater 4	Perfect Manuals
14261	The Getaway	Double Health
14262	The Getaway	Armoured Car Weapon
12521	Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers	Refill Your Health
12522	Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers	Full Arrows/Axes
06841	Medal of Honour Frontline	Invincibility
06842	Medal of Honour Frontline	Unlimited Ammo
06843	Medal of Honour Frontline	1 Shot Kills
06844	Medal of Honour Frontline	Gold Medal for Current Mission
06845	Medal of Honour Frontline	Photon Torpedoes
12581	007 Nightfire	Level Select
12582	007 Nightfire	Upgrade G Gadgets
03301	Grand Theft Auto 3	Weapons
03302	Grand Theft Auto 3	Money
03303	Grand Theft Auto 3	Tank
03304	Grand Theft Auto 3	Dodo Mode
03305	Grand Theft Auto 3	Break off Limbs
04121	Turok Evolution	Invincibility
04122	Turok Evolution	Weapons
04123	Turok Evolution	Level Skip
04124	Turok Evolution	Ammo
04125	Turok Evolution	Invincibility
04241	Cricket 2002	Super Batsman
07671	V8 Supercars Race Driver	Realistic Handling
07672	V8 Supercars Race Driver	Better Damage
12201	Ty The Tasmanian Tiger	Show All Items
12202	Ty The Tasmanian Tiger	Unlock All Technorangs
13651	BMX XXX	Unlock All Movies
13652	BMX XXX	Unlock All Levels
13653	BMX XXX	Unlock All Bikes
02171	Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2	Unlock All Bikes
04351	Tony Hawks Pro Skater 3	All Cheats
04352	Tony Hawks Pro Skater 3	All Levels
04353	Tony Hawks Pro Skater 3	All People
04354	Tony Hawks Pro Skater 3	All Movies
08311	Star Wars Bounty Hunter	Unlock Chapter 1
08312	Star Wars Bounty Hunter	Unlock Chapter 2
08313	Star Wars Bounty Hunter	Unlock Chapter 3
08314	Star Wars Bounty Hunter	Unlock Chapter 4
08315	Star Wars Bounty Hunter	Unlock Chapter 5
12301	Minority Report	Invincibility
12302	Minority Report	All Weapons
12303	Minority Report	Infinite Ammo
12001	Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	All Tricks
12002	Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	All Surfers
12003	Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	All Suits
12004	Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	All Boards
12005	Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	All Levels
11331	Red Faction 2	Super Health
11332	Red Faction 2	Unlimited Ammo
11333	Red Faction 2	Gibby Explosions
11334	Red Faction 2	Unlock All Cheats
08123	SpiderMan	All Fighting Controls
09921	Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	Level Skip
09922	Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	God Mode
09923	Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	All Weapons
08122	SpiderMan	Unlimited Webbing
08121	SpiderMan	Master Code
08124	SpiderMan	Matrix Style attacks
08701	Mat Hoffmans Pro BMX 2	All Levels
08702	Mat Hoffmans Pro BMX 2	Elvis Outfit
10131	Blade 2	All Levels
10132	Blade 2	All Weapons
10133	Blade 2	Infinite Health
10134	Blade 2	Unlimited Ammo
00061	Drakan	Invincibility
00062	Drakan	Increase Character
00063	Drakan	Increase Spells
00064	Drakan	Health
00065	Drakan	Money
05041	Half Life	Invincibility
05042	Half Life	Unlimited Ammo
05043	Half Life	Invincibility
07131	Need for Speed Hot Pursuit 2	BMW Z6
07132	Need for Speed Hot Pursuit 2	HSV Coupe GTS
07133	Need for Speed Hot Pursuit 2	McLaren F1
07134	Need for Speed Hot Pursuit 2	Ferrari F50
07135	Need for Speed Hot Pursuit 2	Ferrari F550
09341	WRC 2 Extreme	Turbo Mode
09342	WRC 2 Extreme	Low Gravity
09343	WRC 2 Extreme	Expert Mode
03251	Max Payne	Level Select
03252	Max Payne	Health
02881	StuntMan	All Cars
02882	StuntMan	All Toys
02883	StuntMan	All Filmography
07541	Simpsons Skateboarding	Bighead Homer
07543	Simpsons Skateboarding	Gangsta Bart
07291	Soldier of Fortune Gold Edition	Invincibility
07292	Soldier of Fortune Gold Edition	Full Ammo
07293	Soldier of Fortune Gold Edition	Heavy Weapons
07294	Soldier of Fortune Gold Edition	Hand to Hand and Explosive Weapons



shortlist

Your definitive guide to the ever expanding library of PlayStation 2 games.



So you've just bought a PlayStation 2, and you're confronted by a dauntingly huge line-up of games to choose from at your local gaming store. Now what? The Shortlist is *OPSS's* one-stop guide to getting an idea of what's hot and what's not. As time goes on and new games come out, we drop some of the older games that don't warrant being remembered, replacing them with newer games that score well in the reviews section.

If you just want to find the best of the best, look for the games that receive a Bronze, Silver or Gold award.

GLOSSARY

Just got your PS2? It's your first console ever and you've bought the best magazine to give the latest and most up-to-date information but don't have a clue what we're going on about? Well, without wanting to patronise those gamers who've been round since the Atari 2600 by spelling out the meaning of gaming terms and acronyms in the reviews and previews, here's your 'at a glance' guide to all things PS2 and technical.

Afterburn: An extra kick of power in flight sims.
AI: Artificial Intelligence.
Analogue: Re: Dual Shock 2. Registering degrees of input, as opposed to digital's on/off status.

Boards: Snowboarders or games featuring the alpine sport.

Coin-op: Coin-operated arcade videogames.

Cut-scene: Explanatory, non-playable scene in videogame (also FMV).

CPU: Central Processor Unit. Brains of PS2.

Dev kits: Programmable PS2s used by developers.

D-pad: Direction pad on PS2 controller.

Dual Shock controller: Controller for PSone.

Dual Shock 2: Controller designed for PS2 (with analogue).

ECTS: European Computer Trade Show.

E3: Electronic Entertainment Expo (US).

Frame rate: Number of images drawn per second in games. Higher frame rate = smoother animation.

FPS: First-Person Shooter (eg Quake III).

Hack 'n' slash: Refers to game (usually fantasy) featuring blade combat.

High res: High resolution (graphics).
HUD: Head Up Display. Screen furniture such as map, speedometer, etc.
Iconography: Graphical shorthand defining game, genre etc.

Low res: Refers to poor quality graphics.

L3: Pressing down on the PS2 controller's left joystick.

Mini-games: Bonus, playable games found in larger titles.

Polygon: Building block of videogame graphics.

PSone: The precursor to PS2. If you don't know what this is then frankly there's no hope for you.

Real-time: When one second of game time equals one second in the real world.

RPG: Role-playing game.

RTS: Real-time strategy.

R3: Pressing down on the PS2 controller's right joystick.

Slim: Simulation.

Strafe: Move sideways while looking straight.

USB: Port to connect peripherals such as keyboard to PS2.

***If there's a term, word or phrase that's still taking your brain cells, let us know and we'll include it here.**

007 NIGHTFIRE # OVERALL 06
Aside from the occasionally fly AI, this Bond title has enough variety to make it a worthy single-player game, and the multiplayer aspects give it longevity.

2002 FIFA WORLD CUP OVERALL 07
The World Cup version of FIFA 2002 with more pizzazz, nifty effects for star player and a serious challenge at the highest difficulty level, but sadly lacking in game modes.

7 BLADES OVERALL 06
Ninja-styled adventure with a 'healthy' dose of chop-socky gameplay.

18 WHEELER OVERALL 06
Brash, chunky and colourful truck racer. Unfortunately it just doesn't offer enough substance to satisfy the hardened gamer.

ACE COMBAT: DISTANT THUNDER OVERALL 07
Best Ace Combat yet. A graphically-polished flight sim with a variety of missions. Best with a flight-stick of some kind.

AFL LIVE 2003 OVERALL 06
Good enough to be a must-buy for footy fans, but not flashy or deep enough to compete with big budget sport sims.

AGGRESSIVE INLINE # OVERALL 08
There's more than enough inline action to keep you impressed, entertained and amused until Tony Hawk's 4 says, "Buy me, dude!"

AIRBLADE # OVERALL 06
Intricate visuals, sublime handling, massive airs - everything you could want hoverboarding to be. Back to the Future anyone?

ALL-STAR BASEBALL 2002 OVERALL 07
An enjoyable all-round game of baseball with oodles of depth, and surprisingly compelling to watch as well as to play.

ALONE IN THE DARK: THE NEW NIGHTMARE OVERALL 06
An undeniably scary survival horror game series, but one that fails to frighten the pants off the PS2 in this comeback.

AQUA AQUA: WETRIX 2.0 OVERALL 07
Addictive, well-realised update of the N64 wuzzler. Essentially it's Tetris with water. Weird, but worthwhile.

ARCTIC THUNDER OVERALL 07
Crude visuals, but plenty of fast and furious gameplay.

ARMORED CORE 2 OVERALL 07
Infinitely-beatable first-person mech shooter. Not for the casual gamer after a quick fix, but perfect for those that love their sims.

ARMY MEN AIR ATTACK: BLADE'S REVENGE OVERALL 02
Very dull helicopter game. Hardly surprising from arguably the worst series of games to grace a console.

ARMY MEN: GREEN ROGUE OVERALL 01
On-rail shooter that manages to sink to new depths of soldiering tedium. Avoid at all costs.

ARMY MEN: SARGE'S HEROES 2 OVERALL 03
Another poorly realised shooter, from the series that stars the little green plastic soldiers.

AUTO MODELISTA # OVERALL 08
The love-child of cell-shaded graphics and Gran Turismo. Despite its cartoony appearance, this is a fairly serious racing game.

BALDRUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE # OVERALL 06
Play D&D on a console! Quite simplistic and arcadey, but this is still a great RPG that adds nicely to the PS2's line up.

BARBARIAN OVERALL 07
A rough-cut fighting game with RPG elements and branching storylines.

YOUR KEY TO SHORTLIST

GOLD
Only for games that scored the elusive 10/10.

SILVER
Awarded to games with a mighty 9/10.

BRONZE
Given to games that scored an impressive 8/10.

BATMAN VENGEANCE OVERALL 06
Interesting action adventure, but just a little too 'on rails' to provide a real challenge.

BLADE II OVERALL 04
Cruddy controls stop this otherwise peachy beat 'em up from realising its full potential.

BLOOD OMEN 2 OVERALL 06
An occasionally very satisfying blood sucking adventure let down by largely unoriginal gameplay.

BURNOUT # OVERALL 06
OutRun grows up, and learns how to crash properly. Thrilling, edgy race action that will threaten your no claims bonus.

BURNOUT 2: POINT OF IMPACT # OVERALL 06
An even more intense racing experience than its predecessor. The Fast & the Furious in a video game.

CAPCOM VS. SNK 2 # OVERALL 08
A superb 2D beat-'em-up from the house that knows all there is to know about combat. With endless two-player fun.

CART FURY: CHAMPIONSHIP RACING OVERALL 06
Arcade racer with crazy physics and a dose of high-speed hand shouldering.

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 3 # OVERALL 03
The latest McRae game set new standards in rally racing visuals, with particularly impressive representation of car damage and weather effects. A must have for offroad racing fans.

COMMANDOS 2 # OVERALL 06
A daunting but extremely worthy and rewarding strategy game where the player controls a team of crack operatives in WWII missions.

CONFLICT ZONE OVERALL 06
A pretty run-of-the-mill RTS game that cleverly forces you to take account of media coverage.

CRASH BANDICOOT: THE WRATH OF CORTX OVERALL 06
Crash spins off PS2 but little has changed from PSone. Time for some new ideas with titles like Ratchet & Clank setting the new standards.

CRASHED OVERALL 05
A rather bland and repetitive destruction derby game, minus the derby. Wreckless offers more to those who want to see cars get trashed.

CRAZY TAXI # OVERALL 06
Arcade thrills aplenty in this no-holds-barred city-smashing racer. If you want speed, buy this now.

CRICKET 2002 # OVERALL 08
The best weather-on-willow sim on any console, ever. Relax and make like it's summer.

DARK CLOUD OVERALL 07
An enthralling RPG with atmospheric music and a world-building element thrown in for good measure.

DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX 2 OVERALL 07
Orthodox but impressive, this BMX sim has an inventive array of tricks.

DEAD OR ALIVE 2 OVERALL 07
Blasting beat-'em-up that's famous for its stealthy gameplay and collection of extremely well-endowed lady fighters.

DEFENDER OVERALL 07
A modern day 3D shooter based on the '80s arcade classic. Far better than the average retro-remake.

DEUS EX # OVERALL 09
The thinking man's action/shooter/adventure genre-busting game that redefines expectations. Superb.

TOP 5 SOCCER GAMES



1. PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 2

Class, and pace... the complete player.

2. FIFA 2003

Back in prime and ready to score.

3. TIF 2003

Building a big reputation. Rooney.

4. ISS 2

Inconsistent, but inspired. Di Canlo.

5. REDCARD

Bringing the game into disrepute.



DEVIL MAY CRY * OVERALL 09
Mesmeric rip-roaring battling with lush surroundings and a superb gothic atmosphere. One of the best PS2 games yet? Definitely.

DINO STALKER OVERALL 04
A light-gun game that has a neat exploration element to it, that the developers failed to exploit properly, leaving us with a rather shallow shooter.

DNA OVERALL 06
Genre warfare and confusing puzzles abound in this bizarre manga adventure.

DONALD DUCK: QUACK ATTACK OVERALL 04
A first-generation platformer that suffers from Stone Age gameplay and graphics.

DRAGON'S LAIR OVERALL 02
Unplayable retro adventure. Should have stayed firmly stuck on the Laser Disc where it belonged.

DRIVING EMOTION TYPE-S OVERALL 04
Dismal racer. Fails to evoke any emotion at all.

DROPSHIP: UNITED PEACE FORCE * OVERALL 08
Impressive combat sim that rewards commitment with paced and varied gameplay.

DYNASTY WARRIORS 3 * OVERALL 08
More of the same great mass battles and explosive action, marred only slightly by samey gameplay.

ECCO: THE DOLPHIN: DEFENDER OF THE FUTURE * OVERALL 08
You're a dolphin and it's up to you to save the world from an alien invasion. Relax in the new age calm underwater adventure.

ENDGAME * OVERALL 09
Sets a new standard in the lightgun shooter genre. Innovative, refreshing and most of all, a tonne of fun.

ESCAPE FROM MONKEY ISLAND * OVERALL 08
Adventure that includes smart visuals, witty script and intelligent puzzles.

ESPN INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD OVERALL 06
Graphically impressive athletics sim marred only by lily AI.

ESPN NATIONAL HOCKEY NIGHT OVERALL 06
Other hockey sims on the market with better gameplay put this in the sin bin.

ESPN NBA 2NIGHT OVERALL 06
Hardcore gameplay makes this one for basketball heads only.

ESPN X-GAMES SKATEBOARDING OVERALL 05
Not-so-extreme skateboarding sim with some unsightly graphical glitches. You're best off sticking with Tony Hawk's.

ESPN WINTER X-GAMES SNOWBOARDING OVERALL 06
Life-like snowboarder, ruined by unsightly bland graphics, unresponsive controls and a lack of excitement.

EOE: EVE OF EXTINCTION OVERALL 05
A dull, button mashing affair.

EVERGRACE OVERALL 02
An ultimately depressing RPG, that fails to engage the player at any meaningful level.

EVL TWIN OVERALL 05
Adventure from the dark side of platforming. Average, so-so animation with 76 levels of twisted plot.

EXTERMINATION OVERALL 07
Alien-inspired survival horror-fest that is set in a deserted Antarctic research base. Positively crawling with cool design innovations.

EXTREME-G 3 * OVERALL 08
A neon beast of a future bike racer that requires skill and brains. Takes some 'inspiration' from the Wipeout series. Not for the faint-hearted.

F1 2001 OVERALL 07
Another solid PS2 Formula One title, but ultimately it's a tad soulless.

F1 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON 2000 OVERALL 05
Hardcore F1 fans will find this a little too easy.

FANTASMION OVERALL 05
The world's first fireworks game. Not enormous, but of rare and random beauty.

FERRARI F355 CHALLENGE OVERALL 07
One of the most realistic racing simulations ever. More for driving game experts than casual racers.

FIFA 2003 * OVERALL 08
Despite closing the gap with a new engine that breaks away from ludicrous flashy tricks and delivers a more realistic football simulation, this is still a real down to Pro Evolution Soccer 2.

FINAL FANTASY X * OVERALL 09
Nothing else needs to be said about this brilliant RPG. A classic Square adventure with next-gen presentation and production.

FORMULA ONE 2003 * OVERALL 08
Another F1 corker! All the drivers, tracks and cars included. Load it up and feel the speed.

FREESTYLE OVERALL 07
This is potentially a great game, but it's scuppered by careless lack of fairness and failure to reward skill with progression.

FUR FIGHTERS * OVERALL 08
Cute fluffy creatures armed to the teeth with shotguns blast each other to pieces. The toy cupboard will never look innocent again.

G1 JOCKEY OVERALL 05
More like an exercise in statistical analysis than a horse racing game, with bland graphics and sound.

GO GO'S BIZARRE ADVENTURE OVERALL 06
Brilliant cel-shaded graphics bring a cast of weirdo anime characters to life in a fighting game based on a comic series.

GHOST RECON OVERALL 07
A squad based first person shooter that suffers from a cumbersome interface for ordering troops about, often degenerating into arcade-style run-and-gun games.

GIANTS: CITIZEN KABUTO OVERALL 06
The Reaper might be cool, but loading times hamper this port of a complex PC battle game.

GIARDON MAN * OVERALL 09
If you have a PS2 collection, you should definitely have at least one game like this one in there! Check it out.

GLOBAL TOURING CHALLENGE: AFRICA OVERALL 07
An impressive racer that is further lifted by clever use of interesting locations.

GRANDIA II OVERALL 05
Expansive, classic RPG adventuring but with horrible graphics and repetitive, uninvoking gameplay.

GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY * OVERALL 09
An even better treat than GTAIII! Cars, crooks, coke, and chaos with total freedom to do what you want, when you want. Funny, frantic. A must have for any serious, or not so serious gamer.

GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC * OVERALL 09
If you don't know already, GT3 is the greatest driving game in the world. Buy it now.

GRAN TURISMO CONCEPT: 2002 TOKYO-GENEVA * OVERALL 08
A more accessible version of GTA, with concept cars. Perfect for those who just want to race, rather than play mechanic.

GRAVITY GAMES OVERALL 04
An unoriginal rip off of the Mat Hoffman series, offering little reason to break away from the aforementioned pearls.

GUMBALL 3000 OVERALL 03
A decidedly crap racing title that fails to deliver on all fronts. Not something to bother with considering how many decent racers are about.

G-SURFERS OVERALL 07
Futuristic racer that's improved by an innovative track editor.

GUILTY GEAR X * OVERALL 05
Pushes hard at beat-'em-up boundaries. The start of a new wave of next-gen 2D fighters.

GUINIGRAVE OVERALL 06
Bizarre manga inspired shooting game with gorgeous visuals, but a distinct lack of depth to back up all that eye candy.

GUN GRIFON BLAZE OVERALL 07
A mech shooter for robot obsessive-types everywhere.

SECOND COMING

We resurrect a title from the gaming graveyard.



NBA STREET

Forget about the single-player game. It's fine, but it's not the real reason for taking another look at this predictably OTT EA Sports BIG take on basketball. No, NBA Street (PS2+10, 6/10) is worth a punt for its two-player mode alone. Fast, fun, showy and ludicrously addictive, this is perfect for a great post pub sesh with your mates. If you can get over the fact that B-ball isn't really a sport in the UK you'll immediately get sucked into the showboating moves while relishing those awesome slam dunks with 'tude worthy of the on-screen players. A great bargain purchase - if you can find it.



HALF-LIFE * OVERALL 09
The award-winning PC first-person shooter/adventure arrives on PS2 in resplendent form. An essential purchase.

HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS * OVERALL 06
Simpistic puzzles and gorgeous graphics makes this a winner for younger fans of the books and films, topped off nicely with Quidditch 'family' goodness.

HEADHUNTERS OVERALL 07
Ding Harry meets MGSD in a world where the law is controlled by bounty hunters. There's a great game hidden here somewhere.

HAVEN: CALL OF THE KING * OVERALL 08
An epic platform game that provides a seamless adventure with no loading interrupting the action, even when travelling to another planet!

HEROES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC OVERALL 03
Patchy PC-style fantasy adventure.

HITMAN 2: SILENT ASSASSIN * OVERALL 08
A disturbingly realistic take on living the life of a hired killer. Not one for the squeamish or pure of heart, but awesome gaming to be had.

INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER * OVERALL 08
Genuine squads and more instant terrace gratification take ISS up to the PS2 level.

ISS 2 OVERALL 07
More arcadey than PES with better commentary, but dodgy ball physics and animation. Not for soccer purists.

JAK AND DAXTER: THE PRECURSOR LEGACY * OVERALL 09
A brilliant platformer from the makers of Crosh Bondicoot that introduces two heroes you'll be seeing a lot more of.

JAMES BOND 007: AGENT UNDER FIRE * OVERALL 08
A thrilling single-player Bond experience, with a great four-player mode and beautiful Bond girls.

JEREMY MCGRATH: SUPERCROSS WORLD OVERALL 03
A motocross game that's just like the real thing (minus the thrills, speed, gritty handling and mud).

JET SKI RIDERS OVERALL 06
Great water effects and Kawasaki-licensed Jet Skis. Shame about the racing...

KENGO: MASTER OF BUSHIDO OVERALL 06
A padded-out training mode makes up for this smart ninja fighter's otherwise rather limited nature.

KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER * OVERALL 08
A bit too similar to Tony Hawk for our liking, but still the best surfing game around.

KESSEN OVERALL 07
A real-time strategy game set in feudal Japan, where you get to command a huge army. Strategy fans only.

KINGDOM HEARTS * OVERALL 08
A beautifully produced RPG with Disney and Square characters. Don't let the kiddie vibe fool you, this one's very tough.

KLONKA 2: LUNARITA'S VEIL * OVERALL 08
Cute and cheerful platformer featuring the lovable glove-eared blue cat-rabbit hybrid. Fun stuff.

KNOCKOUT KINGS 2001 OVERALL 06
A more-than-competent boxing sim. Not a match for Rocky though.

KURI KURI MIX OVERALL 07
A kind of two-player co-operation and cutesy platformer. An odd but worthwhile addition to any PS2 collection.

LARGO WINCH OVERALL 05
Based on a French comic character, this spy game is too linear, and lacks the sort of interactivity that is needed to maintain a game's attention.

LEGAMA 2: DUAL SAGA OVERALL 07
A Japanese RPG that uses a combat system full of combos and special moves. A host of mini-games help prevent this from falling into the 'legend of books'.

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING OVERALL 05
Violent brawler with a shortage of modes and options. There are much better recreations of Pro wrestling.

LE MANS 24 HOURS * OVERALL 08
Accessible for the gamer who's daunted by sim-style vehicle handling, but has depth and thrills in abundance.



LMA MANAGER 2002 ★ OVERALL 05

A-grade soccer management game, but for die-hard football fans only.

LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS ★ OVERALL 06

Superb hack and slash garring based on the movie, not the book, not very deep, but delivers huge battles with tons of things going on in them.

MARVEL VS. CAPCOM 2 OVERALL 07

Arguably the best 2D fighter available on the PS2 thanks to its huge lineup of fifty-six playable characters and awesome 3-on-3 fights.

MADDEN NFL 2003 ★ OVERALL 08

While realistic enough, of the two major NFL games around, this is the flashier. Best for those who'd rather see high scores than realism.

MAT HOFFMANN'S PRO BMX 2 ★ OVERALL 09

Whilst impressive in many areas and exceptional in some, MHPB2 doesn't quite live up to expectations.

MAX PAYNE ★ OVERALL 06

A fine shooting game that is somewhat underrated by the general public. Fantastic Innovations with the bullet time feature complete the game with a very cinematic feel.

MAXIMO ★ OVERALL 05

A tribute to Ghosts 'N Goblins and an excellent mix of retro and modern gaming, resulting in one of the strongest 3D platformers.

NINKU ARMAGEDDON ★ OVERALL 09

Originally a game on Dreamcast and PSone, this third-person action shooter in space has lost nothing in translation. Has three playable characters and is destined to be a cult classic.

MEDAL OF HONOR: FRONTLINE ★ OVERALL 08

A very realistic FPS that has been wowing audiences the world over since the game was released. This is a gripping, immersive game that should not be overlooked.

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SONS OF LIBERTY ★ OVERALL 10

A must-own, state-of-the-art tactical espionage action game that's reason enough to buy a PS2. A superbly paced, gripping story. Unbeatable sound and graphics – a benchmark for future PS2 titles.

MICROMACHINES ★ OVERALL 08

Nothing particularly next-gen about this installment of the series, but an excellent racing diversion nonetheless. Especially fun multiplayer.

MIDNIGHT CLUB OVERALL 04

Speedy, urban racing, that boasts huge and action-packed New York and London environments. Sadly, the gameplay ain't that great.

MODERNROCK: MINISTRY OF SOUND OVERALL 06

An entertaining lightshow generator, containing five full dance albums. Not quite up to the standards set by MTV Music Generator.

MONSTERS, INC. OVERALL 04

Disney Platform game, based on the film. Initially amusing but sloppy and basic with a lifespan of no more than a few hours, though the film clips are entertaining.

MOTO GP OVERALL 07

Gran Turismo on two wheels? Ish. A fantastic motorbike sim that rewards repeated play.

MOTO GP 2 OVERALL 07

A refreshing bike racer. Slightly repetitive gameplay and a shallow multiplayer, but slick, fast and realistic. Excellent 3D graphics and race replay facility.

MOTOR MAYHEM OVERALL 05

Unoriginal deathmatch-based vehicle blasting.

MTV MUSIC GENERATOR ★ OVERALL 09

Home DJ sampler/mixer music maker. It's enormous fun and right-on. This is exciting and well put together.

MX SUPERFURY 2003: FEAT RICKY CARMICHAEL OVERALL 07

Polished and engaging motocross sim that utilises its subject matter to great effect. An excellent extreme game.

MX RIDER OVERALL 06

Motocross/supercross sim that lacks the true grittiness and excitement of the sport.

NBA 2K3 ★ OVERALL 08

Not only realistic, but feature packed as well, offering a wide selection of game modes, with everything from franchise through to street hoops.

NBA HOOP2 OVERALL 06

Instant arcade-styled basketball sim but there are better ones on the street.

NBA LIVE 2002 OVERALL 06

An update of NBA Live 2001. Only for true basketball nuts.

PLATINUM WATCH

The Starfighter series remains LucasArts' best work on PS2. Get the original Star Wars: Starfighter, now only at platinum price rates in all parts of the galaxy.

NBA STREET OVERALL 06

Great looks, great to play, but not what most will want. There's room for improvement.

NEED FOR SPEED: HOT PURSUIT 2 ★ OVERALL 05

One of the better arcade racers to grace the PS2. Truly the best of the NFS series, not just a PS2 update.

NFL 2K3 ★ OVERALL 08

This is the game to own for anyone into American football thanks to its ultra-realistic graphics and gameplay.

NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB ★ OVERALL 08

American football game that has unique features, but unable to compete with Madden 2003.

NHL 2003 OVERALL 07

The definitive ice hockey videogame, but only a slight improvement on NHL 2002.

NHL HITZ 2002 OVERALL 06

A satisfying, if short-lived, arcade-style ice hockey game.

NY RACE OVERALL 05

Average future taxi racer, based on the opening sequence of Luc Besson's sci-fi epic The Fifth Element. Nothing crazy to see here.

ONI OVERALL 07

New character animation in an enjoyable 3rd person sci-fi romp.

ONIMUSHA: WARLORDS ★ OVERALL 08

Impressive survival horror that lets the PlayStation 2 run riot. Does suffer from an iffy PAL conversion, though.

OPERATION WRIBACK OVERALL 06

Lacks variety, but still an enjoyable stealth shooter, nevertheless.

ORPHEN OVERALL 04

A disappointing anime-inspired Japanese RPG.

PARAPPA THE RAPPER 2 OVERALL 07

Rhythm action game from Japan in which you play a rapping dog. Simple but compelling gameplay. Short life span and only really worth revisiting for nostalgia.

PARIS-DAMIAN RALLY OVERALL 05

Based on the race of the same name, this sim does little to inspire interest.

PENNY RACERS OVERALL 04

A half-baked and underfed GT3, with just a few good tracks. It's a difficult one to recommend to anybody wanting a great racer.

POLICE 24/7 OVERALL 05

Basic cop-shot light gun game with motion capture option. Frantic and fast but lacks structure and individuality. Just another on-rails shoot-em-up.

POOLMASTER OVERALL 05

Dull pool sim, despite some tidy ball physics.

PORTAL RUNNER OVERALL 05

Vikki, of Army Men notoriety, gets her own title. It's the best of a bad bunch.

PRISONER OF WAR OVERALL 07

Escaping from POW camps is all well and good, but you remain a prisoner of often rigid game objectives. Even so, this is a bold, compelling adventure game.

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 2 ★ OVERALL 05

For the second year running, the Pro Evolution series has been the best soccer-sim on any system. Lacks licences, but has total realism that fans of the beautiful game will appreciate.

PROJECT EDEN ★ OVERALL 08

Look beyond some not-great visuals and you'll lose weeks to this complex and satisfying first-person shooter/adventure.

QUAKE III ★ OVERALL 04

In four-player, this FPS is the best multiplayer yet. A technical tour de force. It runs like greased lightning and looks absolutely gorgeous.

RAICHET & CLANK ★ OVERALL 09

Pure platforming bliss from the company behind the original Spyro the Dragon titles on the PSone. Loads of gadgets lend to new ideas.

RAYMAN REVOLUTION ★ OVERALL 08

Cartoon-quality graphics elevate this classic platformer starring a disjunctured hero. A title worthy of PS2.

RALLY FUSION: RACE OF CHAMPIONS OVERALL 06

A decent offroad racing simulation that only really falls short in that it fails to match the wonders of Colin McRae Rally 3 and WRC II Extreme.

READY 2 RUMBLE: ROUND 2 OVERALL 07

A marvelous, arcade-based comedy boxing game, pitting ridiculous cartoon fighters against each other.

RED FACTION ★ OVERALL 06

Ace first-person shooter that melds MGS-style tactics and the all-out blasting of the hallowed Quake II. Marred only by some average level design.

REIGN OF FIRE OVERALL 05

Packs plenty of action, but is chaotic to the point where it feels decidedly aimless. Also let down by control issues.

RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X ★ OVERALL 09

A captivating story, cinematic atmosphere, kinetic action, frights, thrills and copious amounts of blood-letting. Give in to its disgustingly depraved clutches.

REZ ★ OVERALL 09

Fight computer viruses from within the system. Exploring the relationship between sound and colour this techno shooter provides pure gameplay. Unique, and refreshing.

RIDGE RACER V OVERALL 07

A popular racer, but high hopes were scuppered by the limited size and a lack of originality.

RING OF RED ★ OVERALL 08

A mean RTS that's fun? Oh yes. A must-buy for the discerning robo-fetishist after something different.

ROBOTECH: BATTLECRY OVERALL 07

A cel-shaded shooter that brings the classic anime to life, but is held back by a decidedly clunky control system.

ROCKY ★ OVERALL 08

The best boxing title available for PS2. Has a great story mode that takes the player through the movies. Adrenaline.

RUGBY ★ OVERALL 08

So far the only PS2 game to represent this sport. More akin to Madden than FIFA in approach, a highly enjoyable and refined take on the sport. EA Sports have done it again.

RUMBLE RACING ★ OVERALL 08

Fast and furious arcade stunt racer that has tonnes of challenge and replay value, especially in two-player mode. Full of totally insane courses to put you through your paces.

RUN LIKE HELL OVERALL 07

A refreshing sci-fi survival horror title with a host of famous names handling the voice acting.

RUNE: VIKING WARLORD OVERALL 04

A Viking slash-'em-up that should have been confined to the Dark Ages.

SALT LAKE 2002 OVERALL 03

Soulless Winter Olympics game. Decent weather effects but the majority of events are rather tedious.

SHADOW OF MEMORIES ★ OVERALL 08

Filmsic adventure that keeps the surprises coming with a serpentine plot.

SHAUN PALMER'S PRO SNOWBOARDER OVERALL 06

Basically Tony Hawk's on snow. It's an exhilarating sport, but the gameplay is unimaginative and the controls sluggish.

SILENT HILL 2 ★ OVERALL 09

One of the most atmospheric and genuinely frightening titles on PS2. Like all of your worst nightmares rolled in to one relentless videogame.

SILENT SCOPE ★ OVERALL 06

Slick but simple shooting gallery-style game where you play a police sniper. Works surprisingly well, despite the lack of the sniper rifle from the arcade. A great launch title that we're still playing.

SILENT SCOPE 2 OVERALL 07

A worthwhile update of this arcade sniper sim, though the formula is looking tired now.

SILFHEED: THE LOST PLANET OVERALL 03

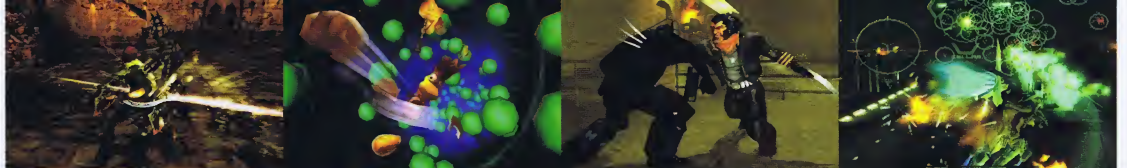
Tedious top-down shooter. No-one bought a PS2 for games like this.

SIR ALEX FERGUSON'S PLAYER MANAGER 2002 OVERALL 06

Adapted loopy management sim, but lacks the killer goal.

SKY ODYSSEY ★ OVERALL 08

A tight sim where you don't have to shoot anything, just complete crazy missions.



SLED STORM	OVERALL 06
A mangled-out, splashy remake of the PSone racing classic, very much in the SSX mould.	
SMASH COURT TENNIS PRO TOURNAMENT	OVERALL 07
Deep & stylish this game suffers from disproportionate leaps in difficulty that can be off-putting.	
SMUGGLER'S RUN 2: HOSTILE TERRITORIES	OVERALL 07
Impressively big, fast and frantic, but not much different to its predecessor.	
SOLDIER OF FORTUNE: GOLD EDITION	OVERALL 05
No-brainer first-person shooter that's average at best. Only for those craving mindless violence.	
SOUL REAPER 2	OVERALL 07
Soul-sucking fantasy adventure that revolves around the exploits of Raziel and his huge Reaper sword.	
SPACE RACE	OVERALL 05
The cartoon kart racer in its simplest form. Lacks originality and is a poor Mario Kart rip-off, but uses cel-shading to nice effect.	
SPIDER-MAN	OVERALL 07
It doesn't display huge innovations over its PSone counterpart, although it's a solid and enjoyable Spidey title either way.	
SPLASHDOWN	OVERALL 07
Above average Sea-Doo racer, with impressive water effects. The racing is sluggish, though.	
SPY HUNTER	OVERALL 06
Pretend to be James Bond. Captures the spirit of the original game and adds further shiny next-gen knobs.	
SSX TRICKY	OVERALL 06
Inventive rainbow colored high speed snowboard game packed with crazy courses, and crazier characters.	
STAR WARS: STARFIGHTER	OVERALL 05
Measurings 3D Star Wars blaster with engaging missions and film-perfect sound effects.	
STAR WARS: SUPER BOMBARD RACING	OVERALL 05
Banal cartoon kart racer. The Force is weak with this one.	
STATE OF EMERGENCY	OVERALL 06
A shallow but worryingly enjoyable game that puts the player at the centre of a riot.	
STAR TREK: VOYAGER: ELITE FORCE	OVERALL 04
File next to <i>Solaris</i> of Fortune in the poor PC port drawer. If it's sci-fi shooter thrills you after, you'd be better off to grab Red Faction on platinum instead, or something new like <i>TimeSplitters 2</i> or <i>007 Nightfire</i> .	
STAR WARS: BOUNTY HUNTER	OVERALL 07
Borghous to look at, taking the gamer into the Star Wars universe, but is let down by repetitive gameplay.	
STREET FIGHTER EX3	OVERALL 06
A decent enough 2D/3D fighting game, but is milking the series to death. There are better 2D fighters from the same company.	
STREET HOOPS	OVERALL 06
More about collecting fancy duds than having a decent game of basketball, which is why this hoops title misses from the line.	
STUNTMAN	OVERALL 06
Won't have the wide appeal of the driver games due to its difficulty, but it's an ingenious concept that thrills and entertains.	
SUMMONER 2	OVERALL 05
Follow-up to the RPG launch title. More action orientated than the original, but still an epic adventure for fans of fantasy.	
SUPER TRUCKS	OVERALL 04
Banal, academy racing that fails to convey the impression of racing mammoth trucks.	
SUPERCAR STREET CHALLENGE	OVERALL 04
A by-the-book arcade racing game round desolate cities. Nothing to recommend it.	
SWING AWAY GOLF	OVERALL 03
Queasy PSone golf sim that's let down by a poor PS2 conversion.	
THEZAN FREDRIDE	OVERALL 04
Based on a Disney film of the same name, this tries to be different with 'surfing' tree branches, but it doesn't work.	

TLZ: WANTED	OVERALL 05
Despite some neat cel-shading effects and amusing Looney Toons content, this platformer is a bit too bland to warrant attention.	
TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT	OVERALL 06
Fantastically playable and graphically spectacular beat-'em-up. The tagging moves make it a worthwhile purchase, even with Tekken 4 about.	
TEKKEN 4	OVERALL 09
Continuing the tradition of fighting game excellence. The first Tekken game to include free-movement.	
TEST DRIVE: OFFROAD WIDE OPEN	OVERALL 06
A toy but limited offroad racer, from the makers of Smuggler's Run.	
THE BOUNCER	OVERALL 06
A fun, accessible brawler whose adventuring elements are fairly limited.	
THE GETAWAY	OVERALL 09
Sony's answer to Grand Theft Auto, with a decidedly darker and nastier storyline. Offers an amazingly life-like virtual replica of London, from the buildings through to the cars.	
THE HOODS	OVERALL 08
Strictly for gamers of pre-school age, this is a faithful and entertaining reproduction of the popular kids' show.	
THE MUMMY RETURNS	OVERALL 05
Sub-standard, adventure-based movie tie-in. You're better sticking to the more reliable Tomb Raider collection.	
THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE	OVERALL 06
It's Crazy Taxi but with Bart and Homer behind the wheel.	
THE SUM OF ALL FEARS	OVERALL 05
A squad-based tactical first person shooter that is let down by horrendously bad AI and fiddly controls for ordering your grunts about.	
THE THING	OVERALL 08
Not only does it do justice to the classic horror film, but also introduces fear and trust issues to the survival-horror genre.	
THE WEAKEST LINK	OVERALL 04
You'll get more enjoyment playing along with the show than you will from putting up with the viper-tongued host.	
THEME PARK WORLD	OVERALL 07
Take on the role of a theme park tycoon for a day in this engaging god sim, where pleasing the crowds and getting those turnstiles a-spinning is your prime directive.	
THIS IS FOOTBALL 2003	OVERALL 07
Has an excellent one-two passing system and is a solid football title, but it still plays in the shadow of Pro Evolution 2 and FIFA 2003.	
THUNDERHAWK: OPERATION PHOENIX	OVERALL 07
A brave attempt to blend arcade and sim with choppers.	
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2002	OVERALL 06
Authentic golf sim, a tad undermined by a random control system.	
TIME CRISIS 2	OVERALL 09
PS2's first on-rails light gun title sets the standard for others to follow. Has a great two-player co-op mode.	
TIMESPLITTERS	OVERALL 09
Fun, fast, frantic and inventive first-person shooter. Buy it for the addictive split-screen multiplayer madness.	
TIMESPLITTERS 2	OVERALL 10
Takes the multiplayer mayhem from TimeSplitters and adds a tonne of options. Major visual improvements, I-Link for 16-player games, single-player mode maker. The works!	
TOXIC XTREME RACER	OVERALL 04
A very limited and repetitive racer based on the Japanese road racing phenomenon.	
TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3	OVERALL 09
Fantastic skate sim that's perfect to play whether you've got two minutes or two hours to spare. Notable for being the first PAL game to have online network play, too.	
TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4	OVERALL 10
Besides a couple new moves, THPS4 takes the series in a refreshing new direction, allowing the player to skate around, interact with the locals and do things at their own pace.	
TOP GUN	OVERALL 04
A flight sim that appears to have been designed by folks that have never seen a plane before.	

PLATINUM WATCH

We're not sure of the exact release date, but slithery spine-chiller *Silent Hill 2* will be out on Platinum any day soon.

TREASURE PLANET	OVERALL 06
An excellent take on the Disney movie of the same name, providing platform game goodness for younger gamers.	
TUROK: EVOLUTION	OVERALL 06
Boasts a wicked line-up of weapons and a variety of gaming styles, but suffers from crappy AI and frame rate issues.	
TWIN CALIBER	OVERALL 03
One of the snoddest shooters around. Takes an interesting twin-pistol gaming concept and runs it with slow gameplay, chronic control issues.	
TWISTED METAL: BLACK	OVERALL 06
On a post-nuclear-war planet, it's time to drive around in frenzied vehicle-based hedonism. This is everything that you'd expect a Twisted Metal game to be on PS2 - and then some.	
UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE	OVERALL 06
A very run of the mill soccer title which, with its very narrow focus on a single tournament, has extremely limited appeal. If you have Pro Evolution or FIFA, you don't need this.	
UFC THROWDOWN	OVERALL 07
Arguably the most realistic fighting game ever made, but extremely repetitive. One for fighting game nuts only.	
UNREAL TOURNAMENT	OVERALL 06
A satisfyingly gory, totally over-the-top and immensely playable first-person shooter. Makes for a nice alternative to Quake III, but is outclassed totally by <i>TimeSplitters 2</i> .	
V8 SUPERCAR RACE DRIVER	OVERALL 09
Real game. Real V8s. Real Aussie tracks. Real fun. The best racing game seen so far on the PlayStation 2 with the best cars in the world. What's not to love?	
VICTORIOUS BOXERS	OVERALL 04
Unreal Japanese boxing title that lacks the killer punch. Pointless to track down while games such as <i>Rocky</i> are about.	
VIRTUA COP ELITE	OVERALL 03
While this may deliver perfect conversions of the two arcade classics, there are far better light gun games available today, making this a bland experience.	
V-RALLY 3	OVERALL 06
Not as instantly playable as <i>WRC II Extreme</i> or <i>Colin McRae Rally 3</i> but effort pays off with some very satisfying racing. It's head and shoulders above the majority of PS2 rally fare.	
VAMPIRE NIGHT	OVERALL 06
A vampire-blasting light gun extravaganza that looks great, but has questionable replay value once the bad boys are all put to rest. Again. Great for building, bulging biceps, though.	
VIRTUA TENNIS 2	OVERALL 06
Far and away the best Tennis simulation to grace the PS2. Besides featuring realistic and intuitive play, the World Circuit mode provides an awesome long term challenge.	
WACKY RACES STARRING DASTARDLY AND MUTTLEY	OVERALL 06
Misg-eyed fans of the TV series will love the visuals. A shame the game isn't all that great, although it beats some of the cartoon based racing games around.	
WILD WILD RACING	OVERALL 06
Off-road buggy-racing game with initially discouraging handling. Stick with it, though, and the Stunt mode can become quite addictive.	
WIPEOUT FUSION	OVERALL 09
Style and substance are here in the most fully realised Wipeout yet. This future racer is as smart and extreme as it gets. Comes complete with a to soundtrack full of big name electronics artists.	
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOKER 2002	OVERALL 06
Extremely playable snooker sim that may convert scappies. Take part in the all-star tournament playing as Hendry or Doherty.	
WORLD DESTRUCTION LEAGUE: HANDED WINS	OVERALL 07
Arcade tank sim that's brilliant in Four-player Deathmatch mode. Lacks lasting appeal in single-player mode, though.	
WORMS BLAST	OVERALL 06
A Tetris-like departure from the usual Worms fare, but one that lacks depth. Fans of the Worms games be aware this is more like <i>Bust-A-Move</i> than what you're used to.	
WRECKLESS: THE WIZKID MISSIONS	OVERALL 07
An amusing mission-based driving game that features excellent collision effects, with cars that be broken down piece by piece.	
WRC II EXTREME	OVERALL 09
Don't let the 'extreme' title fool you, this is pure rally realism. Not as pretty as <i>Colin McRae Rally 3</i> , but has all the official tracks and cars which will make a difference to fans of the sport.	
WWE SMACKDOWN 4: SHUT YOUR MOUTH!	OVERALL 06
This is without a doubt the most realistic representation of the WWE experience on a console yet. All the crazy antics outside the ring are included for a laugh too. Try stuff.	
ZONE OF THE ENDERS	OVERALL 09
Cool mech thriller, with bonus MS2 demo just to get you in the mood. Absolutely brilliant for anime fans who want to see high-speed mech combat.	

AWESOME BUMPER ISSUE!

FULL LENGTH ALBUM EVERY MONTH!

MINISTRY

new!

Magazine Australia

BARS
MUSIC
FASHION
TRAVEL

**massive
attack**

Bush bashing
with 3D

SPIKED

Date rape: the dark
side of clubland

**MYSTIC
MINGER**

Gazes into her shiny
disco ball. What's in
store for 2003?

**access
all areas**

Backstage with
the band aids

**STRAIGHT OUTTA
CANBERRA**

The buzz on Danielsan

THE HYPES
"Ever get the feeling
you've been had?"

NO CD?

Ask your newsagent

MOBY
the quiet American
speaks out

**samba
magic!**

Go nuts in Brazil

ZOOT ALORS!

Pnau - kickin' it with
Kid Creole



ISSUE 03 FRESH READ. FRESH CD.
EXCLUSIVE FREE SISTER BLISS MIX

MINISTRY
Magazine Australia

ON SALE 19 FEBRUARY

THIS IS YOUR IN-ROAD TO THE GAMES INDUSTRY!

WIN AN INTERNSHIP WITH INFOGRADES MELBOURNE HOUSE - AUSTRALIA'S MOST EXPERIENCED DEVELOPER!

Breaking into the games industry can be tough, especially when it comes to getting some relevant experience. Infogrames and OPS2 are here to help one lucky punter with the chance of a life time to get some experience working with an internationally recognised developer, Australia's most prolific and longest serving developer, Infogrames Melbourne House.

Infogrames Melbourne House are the developers of this latest Formula One hit exclusive to PlayStation 2, and is giving one lucky reader a 3 day Internship at Infogrames Melbourne House to experience the excitement of what it's like to develop games for next generation consoles. Grand Prix Challenge is officially licensed by the Formula One Administration Limited and based on the 2002 FIA Formula One World Championship. Grand Prix Challenge is designed to conquer the hearts of all F1 followers and brings a level of realism to the physics, handling and racing strategy never before achieved in a console game. Feel the adrenaline rush of being behind the wheel of an F1 powerhouse as you race against 21 other cars at 60 frames-per-second.

See first hand how it's all done, see what aspects of game development interest you most and improve your CV with this once in a lifetime opportunity!

To win, just tell us in 25 words or less what you think life would be like as a Grand Prix Driver, and follow the directions at the bottom of the page. The one who tells us the most creative answer will be the winner of this once in a life time prize.

This prize is thanks to our friends at GameNation, Infogrames Melbourne House, and Grand Prix Challenge, the most exhilarating Grand Prix experience ever on PlayStation 2.



GRAND PRIX CHALLENGE

CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

1. All entrants must be Australian residents over 18 years of age at the time of entry.
2. The internship must be taken between 28 March 2003 and 18 April 2003.
3. The internship will be for a period of 3 business days.
4. All flights, accommodation and meals are included.
5. No remunerations, wages, salary or payment is included and will not be paid.
6. During the course of the internship, the winner may be subject to confidential information regarding the titles in development at Infogrames Melbourne House. This information must not be reproduced or disclosed to any person outside of Infogrames by any means. The winner may be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement.

HOW TO ENTER - Send entries to OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au with the 'Infogrames Intern' as the subject line or alternatively, send envelopes via snail mail to: 'Infogrames Intern', Official PlayStation Magazine, PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction, NSW 2022. E-mail entrants are entitled to one e-mail per competition only.

Entries should be clearly marked and include: The name of the comp, your name, age, phone number and address. All competitions close March 19, 2003.

SPLINTER CELL

AFTER TRAVELLING TO SHANGHAI TO BRING YOU AN EXCLUSIVE SNEAK PEAK, OPS2 COMPLETE THE PICTURE WITH AN IN-DEPTH REVIEW!

NEXT MONTH
IN OFFICIAL
AUSTRALIAN
PLAYSTATION
MAGAZINE

MGS2: SUBSTANCE

SNAKE WENT INTO HIDING BACK IN FEBRUARY, BUT OPS2 FINALLY TRACK THE ELUSIVE SNEAKMEISTER TO REVIEW THE MOST COMPLETE METAL GEAR GAME YET. WILL IT BE ENOUGH TO FEND OFF SPLINTER CELL?

TOMB RAIDER: AOD

WILL LARA EVER COME OUT OF HER HIDEY HOLE? JUST IN CASE, WE'VE SENT MIKE WILCOX TO ENGLAND TO COERCE THE LATEST FROM LARA'S LIPS.

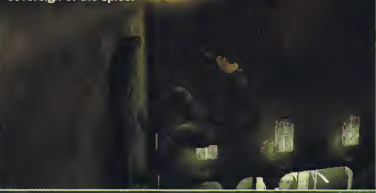
SLAMMED BY DEF JAM

THE WWE WRESTLING GAMES FACE THEIR FIRST SERIOUS COMPETITION IN THE FORM OF THE WORLD'S RAUDIEST RAPPERS - FULL REVIEW!

ANOTHER KILLER DEMO DISC

AUSTRALIA'S ONLY PLAYABLE DEMO DVD FEATURING: ZONE OF THE ENDERS: 2ND RUNNER, THE MARK OF KRI, ROBOCOP, DR. MUTO AND HEAPS OF OTHER COOL STUFF THAT'S SURE TO MAKE YOU DANCE LIKE A MONKEY!

**TOM CLANCY'S
SPLINTER CELL**
Better than the Xbox version, is this sovereign of the spies?



MGS2: SUBSTANCE
With all new VR missions, it's a must-have collector's item.



DEF JAM VENDETTA
Set to rap the wrestling world over the head!



**ZOE OF THE
ENDERS: 2ND
RUNNER**

Read the review, play the demo. Only in OPS2



Clubbers Guide to... 2003



Mixed by Tall Paul & Alex Taylor

featuring tracks by

Fab 4.. feat Robert Owens Cassius/Sound Of Violence Bob Sinclar/The Beat Goes On Royksopp/Remind Me Who Da Funk/Shiny Disco Balls Tiesto/Obsession Dee Dee/The One Coloursound/Fly With Me

2XCD OUT NOW



special promotion thru Sanity Dance Arenas

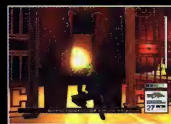
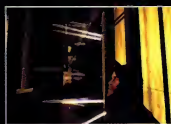
receive the Feb issue of Ministry Mag FREE


For details go to www.ministryofsound.com.au or your local Sanity Dance Arena, while stocks last.



Coming Soon On PlayStation®2....

Tom Clancy's
**SPLINTER
CELL™**



 PlayStation 2

 NINTENDO
GAMECUBE

 XBOX

 PC CD-ROM

 Ubi Soft
ENTERTAINMENT

www.ubi.com/uk



Meet Sam Fisher at: www.splintercell.com

© 2002 Ubi Soft Entertainment. All Rights Reserved. Ubi Soft Entertainment and the Ubi Soft logo are registered trademarks of Ubi Soft Entertainment. Splinter Cell is a trademark of Ubi Soft Entertainment. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox Logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries. "U" and "PlayStation" are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All Rights Reserved. TM, © AND THE NINTENDO GAMECUBE LOGO ARE TRADEMARKS OF NINTENDO. © 2002 NINTENDO.